INDIAN ART

V.S. AGRAWALA

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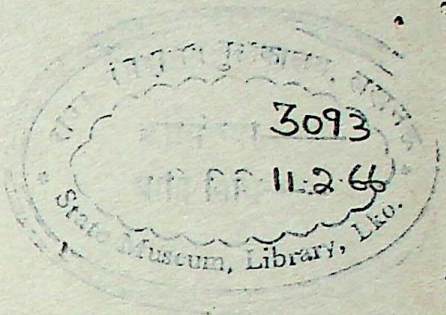
Dedicated to

Doctor Ananda K. Coomaraswamy

INDIAN ART

[*A history of Indian Art from the earliest times up to the third century A.D.*]



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CONTENTS

Preface VII

CHAPTER I :

Introductory 1–7

Purpose, 1 ; Chronology, 1-3 ; Provenance, 3 ; Dates, 3 ; Meaning, 3-4 ; Value of Mind, 4-5 ; Decorative Elements, 5 ; Cultural Life, 5 ; Cult Material, 5-6 ; Symbolical Themes, 6 ; Buddha, 7 ; Śiva, 6-7 ; Unity of Form and Meaning, 7.

CHAPTER II :

Pre-Historic Period 8–14

Palaeolithic Art, 7 ; Mesolithic, 7-8 ; Neolithic, 9-10 ; Rock-Paintings, 10-13 ; 1st Series, 10-11 ; 2nd Series, 11 ; 3rd and 4th Series, 11-12 ; Mori Rock-Paintings, 12-13 ; Rock Engravings, 13 ; Copper Culture, 13-14.

CHAPTER III :

Indus Valley Art 15–39

Introductory, 15-17 ; Architecture, 17-20 ; The Great Bath, 19 ; Granary, 19 ; Dockyard, 20 ; Sculpture, 20-22 ; Harappa Torsos, 21-22 ; Bronze Sculpture, 22-23 ; Terracotta Figurines, 23-25 ; Female Figures, 24-25 ; Pottery, 25-28 ; Special Types, 26-28 ; Faience, 28-29 ; Jewellery, 29-30 ; Shapes of Beads, 30 ; Classes of Ornaments, 30 ; Girdles, 30 ; Miscellaneous Ornaments, 31 ; Hairpins, 31 ; Ivory, 31 ; Shell, 31-32 ; Seals, 32-38 ; Pillar on the Unicorn Seals, 33-35 ; Vedikā, 35 ; Types of Seals, 35-36 ; Animals on the Seals, 36-37 ; Mythological Creatures, 37-38 ; Copper Tablets, 38 ; Chronology of the Indus Valley Civilisation, 38-39.

CHAPTER IV :

(a) Vedic Arts and Crafts 40–45

Crafts in the Vedas, 40 ; Viśvakarmā, 40 ; Śilpa, 40 ; Weaving, 40-41 ; Cartwright, 41 ; Utensils, 41 ; Occupations, 41 ; House-building, 41-45 ; Architectural Lay-out, 42-3 ; Details of a House, 43 ; Roofing, 43-44 ;

(b) Vedic Symbols in Art 45–55

Divinities, 45-6 ; Ideas and Concepts, 46 ; Animals and Birds, 46 ; Articles and Objects, 46 ; Trees and Flowers, 47 ; Miscellaneous, 47 ; Śrī-Lakshmī, 47 ; Tree, 47 ; Yaksha, 48 ; Nāga, 48 ; Sūrya-Chandra, 48 ; Ardhanārīśvara, 48-9 ;

Kumāra, 49 ; Gaṇapati, 49 ; Ambikā, 49 ; Samudra, 49 ; Svastika, 49-50 ; Daivāsuram, 50 ; Trivikrama, 50 ; Jyotirliṅga, 51 ; Suparṇa, 51 ; Mahisha, 51 ; Pūrṇa-Kumbha, 51 ; Chakra, 51-2 ; Yūpa, 52 ; Skambha, 52 ; Sapta-Ratna, 52 ; Padma, 53 ; Kalpavṛiksha, 53 ; Sumeru, 53-54 ; Chakra-Stambha, 54 ; Others, 54-5.

CHAPTER V :

(a) Art in the Mahā-Janapada Period **56-68**

Introductory, 56-8 ; Pāli literature, 58 ; Pillars, 58-9 ; Elements of Ancient Indian Palace, 59-64 ; Kūṭāgāra, 64 ; Roof, 64-6 ; Jaina Āgama Evidence, 66-8.

(b) Symbols on Punch-marked Coins **68-70**

(c) Art of India and Jambūdvīpa **70-4**

Geographical Background of Jambūdvīpa, 70-1 ; Cultural Background, 71 ; Early Art Forms, 71-4.

CHAPTER VI :

Śaiśunāga-Nanda Period **75-83**

Introductory, 75-7 ; Mother Goddess Ring-stones, 77-20 ; Mother Goddess Śrī [Mātā Śrī Devī], 80-2 ; The Buddhist Stūpa of Piprahwā and its Relics, 82-3.

CHAPTER VII :

(a) Mauryan Art **84-11**

Introductory, 84 ; Architecture of Pāṭaliputra, 84-5 ; The Palace, 85-6 ; The Assembly Hall, 86-7 ; The Assembly Hall in the Sabhā Parva, 87-8 ; Wooden Platforms, 89 ; Mauryan Art under Aśoka 89-92 ; Barabar Cave Dwellings, 92-3 ; Aśokan Pillars 93-5 ; Pillars found up to now, 95-7 ; The Bakhirā Lion Capital, 97 ; The Elephant Capital at Saṅkisā, 97 ; The Rāmpurwā Bull Capital, 97 ; The Lion Capital of Nandangarh, 97 ; The Rāmpurwā Lion Capital, 97 ; The Sarnath Lion Capital, 97-8 ; Component Parts, 98-101 ; The Sānchī Lion Capital, 101 ; Meaning of the Symbolism of the Sarnath Lion Capital, 102-3 ; Origin of Mauryan Art, 103-10.

(b) Folk Art **110-18**

Identification, 112 ; Style, 113-4 ; Meaning and Cult of Yaksha, 114-18.

CHAPTER VIII :

Suṅga-Kāṇva Art **119-74**

Introductory, 119 ; The Stūpa, 119-20 ; Earlier Tradition and Symbolism, 120-4 ; Building of a Stūpa, 124-6 ; The Stūpa Architecture, 126-8 ; Stūpa of Bharhut, 128-32 ; Pradakshiṇāpatha, 132 ; Outer Railing, 132-3 ; Details of Sculpture, 133 ;

Superhuman beings, 134-5 ; Devatās, 135 ; Nāgas, 135 ; Apsarasas, 135-6 ; Human Beings : Royal Persons, 136 ; Religious Persons, 136 ; Animals, 136-7; Objects of Worship, 137 ; Jātaka Scenes, 137-47 ; Age of the Stūpa, 147-8 ; Sāñchī Stūpas, 148-9 ; The Great Stūpa, 150-1 ; Gateways, 151-2 ; Harmikā Railing, 152 ; Crowning Umbrella, 152 ; Sculptures, 152-4 ; South Gateway, 154-6 ; Backside : Top Architrave, 154 ; Middle Architrave, 154 ; Lower Architrave, 155 ; Front face, 155 ; Inner face, 155 ; Left Pillar, 155 ; Right Pillar, 156 ; Inner face, 156 ; Northern Gateway, 156-9 ; Inner face, 158 ; Outer side, 158 ; Left, 158 ; Right, 159 ; Right Pillar, 159 ; Inner face, 159 ; Eastern Gateway, 159-62 ; Top Architrave, 160 ; Middle Architrave, 160 ; Lowest Architrave, 160 ; Left Pillar, 160 ; Inner face, 161 ; Right Pillar, 161 ; Inner face, 161-2 ; Back face, 162 ; Western Gateway, 162-5 ; Top Architrave, 162 ; Middle Architrave, 162 ; Lowest Architrave, 162 ; Left Pillar, 162-3 ; Right Pillar, 163-5. Stūpa II. 165-70 ; Introductory, 165-7 ; Decoration of the Ground Railing, 167-8 ; Śālabhañjikā, 168 ; Stūpa worship, 168-9 ; Animals, 169 ; Uttarakuru, 169 ; Birds, 169 ; Yaksha, 169-70 ; Stūpa III. 170-2 ; Introductory, 170-1 ; Aśoka Pillar, 171 ; Two Apsidal Temples, 171-2 ; Bodhgaya 172-4.

CHAPTER IX :

Rock-cut Architecture **175–215.**

(a) Udaigiri and Khaṇḍagiri Caves, 175-85

Introductory, 175-6 ; Rāṇīgumphā, 176-8 ; Gaṇeshgumphā, 178-9 ; Vāsavadattā-Udayana Story, 179-80 ; Scene of Mad Elephant, 180-1 ; Rape Scene, 181-3 ; Gaṇeshgumphā, 183-5 ;

(b) Buddhist Rock-cut Architecture, 186-215 ; Hīnayāna Caves, 186-8 ; Chaitya Halls, 188 ; Vihāra, 189-90 ; Western Indian Chaitya Halls and Vihāras, 190f ; Bhājā, 190 ; Vihāra, 191-2 ; Chaityaghara, 192-3 ; Bhājā Stūpas, 193-4 ; Kondāne Vihāra and Chaitya Hall, 194 ; Pītalkhorā, 194-7 ; Ajantā (Ajiṇṭhā) 197-9 ; Bedsā Caves, 199-200 ; Nāsik (Nāsikyā), 200-2 ; Chaitya Hall at Nāsik, 202-3 ; Junnar, 203-5 ; Karle 205-10 ; Kanherī (Kṛishṇagiri), 210-2 ; Chronology, 212-5.

CHAPTER X :

Kushāṇa Art at Mathurā **216–60**

Mathurā as a Centre of Art, 216 ; Mathurā Art Style and Contents, 216-8 ; Stūpa Architecture, 218-21 ; Padmavara-vedikā, 221-4 ; Śālabhañjikā, 224-30 ; Jaina Art of Mathurā, 230-3 ; Tīrthaṅkara Images, 233-4 ; Origin of the Buddha Image, 235-46 ; Yaksha and Nāga Statues, 246-51 ; Brāhmanical Images in Mathurā Art, 251-3 ; Śuṅga Period, 253 ; Kushāṇa Period, 253 ; Gupta Period, 254 ; Brahmā,

254-5 ; Vishṇu, 255-6 ; Balarāma, 256 ; Śiva, 256-7 ; Sūrya, 257-8 ; Kārttikeya, 258-9 ; Gaṇeśa, 259 ; Indra, 259 ; Agni, 259 ; Lakshmī, 259-60 ; Durgā, 260 ; Saptā Mātṛikā, 260 ;

CHAPTER XI : **261–76**
Gandhāra Art

CHAPTER XII : **277–307**
Stūpas in the Āndhra-Sātavāhana Period
Introductory, 277-9 ; Rock-cut Chaitya, 279-83 ; Amarāvatī Stūpa, 283-4 ; Inscriptions, 284-6 ; Form of the Amarāvatī Stūpa, 286-90 ; Sculptures, 290-5 ; Contents, 295-6 ; Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa Stūpa, 296-7 ; History and Inscriptions, 297-9 ; Mahāchetiya, 299-300 ; The Great Stūpa (Mahāchetiya, Mahāthūpa), 300-2 ; Palace, 302-3 ; Stadium (Ākrīḍa or Mallaśālā), 303-4 ; Sculpture, 304-7.

CAAPTER XIII **308–24**
Indian Terracottas

APPENDIX I : **325–36**
Symbols and Icons in Classical Art and Religion
Introductory, 325-8 ; Śrī-Lakshmī, 328-30 ; Balarāma, 330 ; Vishṇu, 330-31 ; Śiva, 331-32 ; Tīrthaṅkara, 332 ; Buddha, 332-3 ; Brahmā, 333 ; Sūrya, 334 ; Vaiśravaṇa Kubera, 334-35 ; Nāgas, 335 ; Saptamātṛikās, 335 ; Other tutelary divinities, 335-36 ; Bhadramaṇi, 336.

Description of the Line-drawing plates **337-54**
Description of the Half-tone plates **355-9**
General Index **360-89**
Half-tone plates 1–38, containing CXXXIX figures.

PREFACE

Indian art is a subject which shows the maximum creative endeavour of the Indian mind and hands. The evidence of art is as vast and rich as that of Indian literature, religion and philosophy. In order to understand the soul of India, the evidence of art is a window through which the 'Open Sesame' treasures of aesthetic value can be viewed in the form of monuments, sculptures, paintings, bronzes, terracottas, etc. Indian art was late in coming to its own on the stage of world art but now its beauty and meaning have established themselves in the eyes of both scholars and lovers of beauty.

Several histories of art and architecture of India have been written before. The works of Fergusson, Smith, Coomaraswamy and Percy Brown are full of merit and hold the field even today. But they are mostly of a descriptive character with little reference to meaning and generally deal with sculpture and architecture separately. During the last fifteen years of my work as teacher of Indian art to post-graduate classes, I realised that there was the need for a new 'History of Indian Art' in which architecture and sculpture should be dealt with as part of a single scheme, as the builders of the monuments actually conceived them ; secondly that objective description should be accompanied with an exposition of meaning of religious and philosophical inspiration which brought the art into existence. I have tried to present this two-fold point of view in this new history of Indian art. In addition to these two features I have gone to the original Sanskrit and Pali sources to trace the literary background of the works of art and this has led to the understanding of the art monuments more clearly as embedded in the cultural conciousness of the Indian people through the ages. A net advantage of this method has been the recovery of a large number of ancient terms, hundreds of which have been freely introduced here taking care to explain them by equivalent modern terms where possible. This method had long been accepted as valid and essential in the study of Greek and Roman arts where the surviving literature has been patiently tapped for recovery of original art terms. Dr. Coomaraswamy was the pioneer of this method in Indian context and the same has been carried much further in the present study. Besides Sanskrit and Pali texts early inscriptions of the Śuṅga, Kushāṇa, Āndhra periods (2nd cent. B.C.—3rd cent. A. D.) have proved very faithful in supplying a number of appropriate art terms for sculpture and various elements of architecture. For example, *Ghara-mukha* (porch) *Pāniya-poḍhi* (cistern of water), *Dvigarbha* (two-celled cave), *Chatushpada-paṅkti* (a row of animals as seen on the drum of the Sarnath

Capital which had begun to be regarded as auspicious from pre-Mauryan times), *darpaṇā* (woman holding mirror), *Padmavara-vedikā* (lotus-railing), *Putra-vallabhā* (mother and child), etc. There are hundreds of such terms known from inscriptions and literary texts which will be found scattered throughout the book. They have been brought together in the word index.

I have taken care to raise and discuss specific problems relating to the art of each period. The idea has been to help in a critical formulation and assessment of the value of Indian art in the successive periods.

Another feature of this study is to pay special attention to the evolution of the art motifs. For example, from the female figures on the Stūpa railings at Bharhut, Bodhgaya and Mathura, to the female figures of the exterior of the Koṇārka Sun temple may seem to be a far cry, but a close study reveals their evolution from the motif of the garden-sports (*Udyāna-krīḍā*) and water-sports (*Salila-krīḍā*), which have a literary background from Pāṇini and the Jātakas up to Hemachandra and even later.

I have naturally persuaded myself to give due recognition to the Indian point of view in discussing the special problems of each period. This has helped to earn a rich harvest of traditional meaning, of course, within the orbit of available evidence.

In Chapter I, Introductory, I have stated my point of view about the discovery of meaning and treating divine images and auspicious motifs as symbols of religious thought and philosophy. The supreme value of art consists in the fact that it is a bridge between the two worlds of mind and matter both invested with beauty. Art is an idea in visual form. This is the mystery of art to be decoded by the cultural tradition of the people. Indian aesthetic theory looks upon art as the descent of heaven on earth (*deva-sānnidhya*). The external form, howsoever good, fulfils only one half of artist's efforts, the other half is found to be eloquent with meaning. Even the decorative motifs like foliated scrolls (*Patra-rachanā*) of Gupta art were considered to be the visible form of Vishṇu's heaven and blank surface was regarded as ugly or meeting place of the demons. This basic point of view about symbolical themes of Indian art as Buddha, Śiva, Devas, etc. should be thought as the real eye of art in India, where the meaning of the outer form has been preserved in an unbroken tradition as nowhere else in the world.

Chapter II, Pre-historic Period, draws attention to the artefacts or tools of men living in the Old and New Stone ages. The collective evidence proves the distribution of Primitive Man in India from Kashmir to Madras. Besides the modern terms for the pre-historic implements attention may be drawn to the old terms as *aśman-mayī vāśī* (stone celts), *āyasī vāśī* (copper celts), *aśma-chakra* (stone wheel or

pulley), *svadhiti* (axe) all used in the Ṛigveda, pointing to the fact that Ṛigvedic man knew some details of the culture of the pre-historic man.

Chapter III, Indus Valley Art, throws light on the identification of the Great Mother Goddess and in it a suggestion has been made that it was a civilization of the *Asuras*. The existence of the ten contingents of the architecture of a model city at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa shows that their town-planning closely agrees with the description of historical towns built according to plan. These ten items may be identified as *Prākāra* (City-wall), *Vapra* (High Foundation of the rampart or earth work), *Dvāra* (City-gate), *Aṭṭālaka* (Towers & Bastions), *Mahā-patha* (Highway), *Prāsāda* (Palace), *Āpaṇa* (Market-place), *Pushkariṇī* (Great Bath or religious pond), *Santhāgāra* (Town-hall) and *Koshṭhāgāra* (Granary). This enables us to see an integrated picture of the earliest town-planning in India.

In this Chapter a scrutiny of the pillar on the unicorn seals in its several variations has helped to identify the sign as a *Rudra-Śiva-Stambha* or pillar sacred to Rudra topped by a bowl and supporting a railed structure or *Vedikā* for *Agni* which was regarded as another form of Rudra (*Agnir-vai Rudraḥ*).

Chapter IV (a), Vedic Arts and Crafts, is based largely on references in the Vedic mantras and other literature to a variety of *śilpas* and also the architectural details of house-building, dress and ornaments. Full use has been made of the material in the two *Śālā-sūktas* of the Atharvaveda (AV. 3-12, 9-3).

Chapter IV (b), Vedic Symbols in Art, is a new study explaining the significance of a large number of divine and human symbols in Indian art in the light of Vedic evidence. Special attention may be drawn to the meaning of *Śrī-Lakshmī*, *Kumāra*, *Daivāsuram*, *Trivikrama*, *Pūrṇa-kumbha*, *Yūpa* and *Kalpa-vṛiksha*.

Chapter V (a), Art in Mahājanapada Period, deals with the numerous *śilpas* that had been developed in that creative age and as found in the early Buddhist and Jaina literature and which are mentioned by Pāṇini under the general name of Jānapadī Vṛitti or simply as Jānapadī by Yāska. An explanation of the city described in the *Mahā-Unmagga Jātaka* and of about twenty motifs painted on its walls as recorded in a *sūtra*-like form, pushes back the history of painted halls in Indian palaces to the earliest times. For a graphic descriptian of a palace in its elevational aspect (*Udaya Chhanda*), I am indebted to Dr. Coomaraswamy's paper on this subject. That evidence from Pali texts has been supplemented by the testimony of the Jaina Āgamas.

Chapter V (b), Symbols on Punch-marked Coins, has been especially admitted in a history of Indian art as the symbols constituted the main alphabet of art expression from about the 7th century B. C. to the 1st century B. C.

Chapter V (c), Art of India and Jambūdvīpa, deals with the material noticed by Dr. Coomaraswamy as Western Asiatic motifs. The book traces their Indian background from literary sources.

Chapter VI, Śaiśunāga-Nanda Period, describes the architecture of the Old and New Rājgṛiha. Here an important section is that of Mother Goddess ring-stones which should be identified as *Śrī-Chakras* of the cult of Goddess *Śrī-Lakshmī*, which may be traced to the Yajurveda and even to the Khila-Sūkta of the Ṛigveda, having a continuous tradition in religion, art and literature up to our own times. This affords a very valuable evidence about the worship of the Great Mother Goddess in India, which henceforth should supply an independent chapter to the history of the *Magna Mater* (*Mahī-mātā*) in the various religious arts of the world.

Chapter VII (a), Mauryan Art, makes a special study of the remains of Mauryan palace at Kumrahara (*Chandragupta-Sabhā*). The evidence of the Mahābhārata about the assembly hall of king Yudhishṭhira has been invoked as supplying common features with the Mauryan assembly hall. The problem of the origin of Mauryan art and especially of Mauryan polish is taken up in detail and new literary evidence has been extracted to show the antiquity of the polish on stone and ceramics (Northern Black Polished Ware) in India. Much attention has been given to the six component parts of the Sārnāth Lion Capital with special reference to their factual description and symbolical meaning. The lion capital illustrates Asoka's conception of Buddha as *Mahāpurusha*. I have dealt with this topic in much more detail in my book '*Chakradhvaja—The Wheel Flag of India*' which may be usefully consulted for showing that the Lion Capital of Sarnath was the outcome of the National consciousness of the Indian people, including the followers of Buddhist, Jaina and Brāhmanical religions and tradition as handed down from the Indus Valley and Ṛigveda up to the 19th cent. for which about fifty new sources have been cited there.

Chapter VII (b), Folk Art, explains the history of the cult and iconography of *Yakshas* and *Nāgas*, which played such an important part in Mauryan, Śuṅga and Kushāṇa art.

Chapter VIII, Śuṅga-Kāṇva Art, includes the explanation of the symbolism of Stūpa monuments from the earliest times to the days of Buddhism. The correspondence between *Stūpa* and *Yūpa* has been set forth as known from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa on the one hand and Buddhist texts on the other. The building of a monumental Stūpa (*Mahāchetiya*) was regarded as an event of universal acclamation, in which the whole community poured forth the highest ecstacy of its soul. Both the rich and the poor adored the *Mahā-thūpa* as the visible symbol of the heavenly light that incarnated on earth in the form of the *Mahā-Purusha*. A vivid description is available in the

Mahāvaṁsa recording a number of architectural terms which help us to understand the building of a *Mahā-Stūpa* in all its details from the foundation to the top. It was no ordinary pile of stone and bricks but Divine Glory made manifest on earth in which many popular cults of the *Yakshas, Nāgas, Suparṇas, Kinnaras* and *Devatās* were mingled. The Great Buddha himself had expressed his last will in favour of raising a Stūpa for the *Tathāgata* and worshipping it as they did for the ancientmost *Chakravartin* sovereigns. A detailed account of the architecture and sculpture of the great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sānchī is given with special reference to the *Uttarakuru* motif with its Wish-fulfilling Trees (*Kalpa-vṛikṣha*) as recorded in the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Jātaka literature and as depicted on the railings and gateways.

Chapter IX (a), Rock-cut Architecture, describes the architecture of the Orissan caves giving special attention to the identification of the various scenes depicted in the Rāṇī Gumphā and Gaṇeśa Gumpha Caves in which the romantic stories of Udayana-Vāsavadattā and Dushyanta-Śakuntalā are carved in relief.

Chapter IX (b), Buddhist Rock-cut Architecture of Western India, as produced in the Hīnayāna phase, is described with reference to the *Chaitya* halls and *Vihāras*. A new identification of the scenes at Bhājā is proposed as their depicting king Māndhātā visiting the *Uttarakuru* country and not the figures of Indra and Sūrya. The description of the chaitya-halls at Bhājā, Kondāne, Pītalkhorā, Ajantā, Bedsā, Nāsik, Junnār, Karle, Kanherī is given in a detailed manner showing that the movement of rock-excavation enjoyed vide extension in space and time and that it was preceded by similar wooden architecture on a grand scale.

Chapter X, Kushāṇa Art at Mathura, besides giving a factual description of the Mathura Stūpas and sculptures, both Buddhist and Jaina, discusses the important question of the origin of the Buddha image. It shows that all the available evidence of art and literature is in favour of Indian origin in the Mathura School under the overall influence of the religious movement of *Bhakti*, which touched deeply not only the Bhāgavatas but also the Buddhists and the Jainas. The main line of enquiry persues an analysis of the elements of the Buddha's iconography clearly showing that all the elements, excepting the halo, were rooted in the traditional forms of a *Chakravartī* and a *Yogī* which were combined for producing the Buddha image. Only the halo was borrowed from Iran where it was known as *Hvarr* or the Disk of Divine Glory seen round the head of religious prophets and kings. A special section on Brāhmanical images in Mathura Art has been added for the first time. The other noteworthy feature of this study is the interpretation of the female figures on the railing pillars of Mathura in the light of the different poses and the scenes associated with female garden- and water-sports, of which a detailed list is available in the early Sanskrit Kāvyas and Purāṇas like the Matsya Purāṇa (Chap. 255).

Chap. XI, Gandhāra Art, besides presenting the available evidence of the Stūpas and sculptures on a vide canvas from the Indus to the Oxus or Taxila to Kunduz takes into account the important problems of origins with respect to its Indian and Hellenistic motifs, which developed in an eclectic atmosphere of free give-and-take resulting in an unparalleled creativity of works of art and statues and images of high interest and value. In addition to the Buddhist specimens, Brāhmanical sculptures also were being produced in Gandhāra as images of Śiva, Vishṇu, Sūrya, Kārttikeya, etc. A brief evidence of the art-finds at Termez on the Oxus exposed by the French and Russian delegations has also been included in this chapter. Fuller notices of this material are still awaited. The theory of the origin of the Buddha image in Gandhāra has been eking out without any substantial support and should be laid to rest once for all. The testimony of the Divyāvadāna as to the first formulation of the Buddha image at Mathura points clearly to the ancient tradition about this matter. There is no reason to belittle the achievements of the art of Gandhāra by virtue of its long creative history, prolific nature and originality of themes and its capacity to absorb the diverse influences pouring from India, Iran, Graeco-Roman world and Central Asia.

Chapter XII, Stūpas in the Āndhra-Sātavāhana Period, concentrates on the wonderful output of a creative effort ranging over five centuries by the dominant spirit and wealth amassed by the Sātavāhana merchants and rulers. The evidence in the Mahāvaṁsa regarding the building of the *Mahā-chetiya* and that of the inscriptions has been particularly utilized for understanding these great monuments of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa, etc. The sculpture found there has a delicate feel as if cast in solidified butter. It has been shown that the art influences from Magadha, Kaliṅga, Central India, Western Indian Caves and South India, were converging on the Āndhra country which contributed to a new quality, vigour and variety of art motifs employed in the embellishment of the Stūpas and their railings.

Chapter XIII, Indian Terracotta, deals with clay-figurines, which is a subject of unique richness and developed parallel to stone sculpture as the democratic means of spreading art consciousness. Although described as poor man's sculpture, the art of clay-figurines attained to solemn heights, both by virtue of their beauty and as social and religious documents. The available number of clay-figurines is very large ranging in date from the Indus Valley to Pahārpur and the later brick temples of Bengal. A bigger monograph on this subject is under preparation.

Appendix I, Symbols and Icons in Classical Art and Religion, has been added with the specific purpose of looking before and after. The numerous cults of tutelary gods and goddesses which had been in the field for thousands of years were now being transformed as the higher religion of classical Hinduism. The richness of their

symbolical meaning was retained but subordinated and reorganised in the iconographic forms of such higher Gods as Vishṇu, Śiva, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Skanda, etc. Many obscure religious cults took their final leave by getting merged in the great movements of the *Bhāgavata, Saura, Śaiva* and *Tantra* disciplines. For example, the *Suparṇa* and *Śrī-Lakshmī* cults became part of Vishṇu's iconography. The cult of *Gaṅgā* and *Yamunā* was given a subordinate place on the door-jambs of the temples of Vishṇu and Śiva. The Harivaṁśa gives a list of hundred and eight Auspicious Symbols (*maṅgalāshṭa-śatam*), most of which were retained and given honorific places in the iconographic formulas (*dhyāna* and *sādhana*) of the Great Gods of the classical religion. The Yakshas lost their independent character and became subservient to Buddha, Kubera, Śiva, Gaṇeśa or Kumāra. The process is clearly recorded in literature and preserved in iconography. The *Revatī Kalpa* of the Kāśyapa-Saṁhitā is a rare text which has preserved the names of several hundred minor goddesses, now all classified under the new title of *Jātahāriṇī* (equivalent of Buddhist Hārītī) and equated with Revatī or the 'Seven Divine Mothers'. The Nāga deities were merged in the cult of *Balarāma.* These problems occupied the major attention of the religious teachers and sculptors for about five hundred years (c. 1st to 5th cent. A.D.). The Purāṇas, Āgamas and Saṁhitās provide the data of religious synthesis worked out in the Sanskrit epoch of the Kushāṇa and Gupta civilisation. Every student of Indian art standing on this threshold of the old and the new should note all the forms and symbols that had gone before and also those that were to emerge later with the full development of the Brāhmanical images and temples. The present study just takes us to the story of the preceding age to initiate its subsequent part from Gupta times onwards which would be the subject of volume II. I had intended to include a chapter on Palace Architecture, but since the subject developed into a book, I have chosen to publish it separately under the title *Ancient Indian Palace Architecture.* Additional information about some of the topics discussed here is contained in my papers being published simultaneously under the title *'Studies in Indian Art'*.

In writing this book on the History of Indian Art I have utilised the extensive sources written by other authors and also benefited from my own pervious writings and interpretations. I am deply indebted to Shri Shiv Kumar Gupta, M. A. Research Scholar under me for the line-drawings and to Shri Prithvi Kumar M. A. my son, for reading the proofs and preparing the word index. They have undergone immense labour for which my cordial blessings go to them.

Banaras Hindu University.
7-3-1965

VASUDEVA S. AGRAWALA

Placing of Line-drawing plates I—LXVIII, containing 251 figures:

Plates		Pages
I—II	facing	8—9
III—IV		16—17
V—VIII		24—5
IX—XII		72—3
XIII—XVI		76—7
XVII—XX		96—7
XXI—XXIV		128—9
XXV—XXVI		146—7
XXVII—XXVIII		150—1
XXIX—XXX		170—1
XXXI—XXXII		174—5
XXXIII—XXXIV		184—5
XXXV—XXXVI	facing	192—3
XXXVII—XL		216—7
XLI—XLIV		240—1
XLV—XLVIII		248—9
IL—L		250—1
LI—LII		254—5
LIII—LVI		260—1
LVII—LVIII		272—3
LIX—LX		280—1
LXI—LXIV		296—7
LXV—LXVIII		312—3

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTORY

PURPOSE—Indian art is a mirror of the thought, religion, philosophy, cults and culture of India. It is a rich commentary on the life of the Indian people. How they lived, how they felt, what were their ideas about the Divine, how they worshipped and what they created on the plane of matter is documented in the creations of Indian art. The material is extensive as now available in the form of architectural monuments, sculptures, images, paintings, bronzes, clay-figurines, pottery, ivory figures and other minor arts. Each part of the country has been the arena of art production. The tempo of creative activity changed from centre to centre during successive periods but the overall stream of Indian æsthetic endeavour belongs to the whole country.

Each region has taken its due share in this session of beauty (*Rūpa-sattra*). The genius of many a people has contributed to this enrichment, but the inspiration and the meaning throughout are essentially Indian. With the extension of Indian culture beyond the seas and across the mountainous frontiers the monuments of Indian art took root in other lands carrying with them the original inspiration in the matter of ideas, and to a large extent in form also. Fortunately, the monuments exist to this day as proof of the expansive art movements that originated in the home-land and took shape outside. The depth and intensity of the colossal æsthetic flood which once engulfed the inter-continental regions from Indonesia to Central Asia extract our admiration. An integrated study of all the varied creations of Indian art necessitates an interpretation in the light of the philosophy, religion and cultural patterns that flourished on the Indian soil and are preserved in her sublime literature from the Vedas up to the Purāṇas and Kāvyas.

CHRONOLOGY—This art material is not only vast in space but also extensive in time. The story begins in the Indus Valley in the third millenium B. C. and covers about fifty centuries. The sequence of this long chronology is more or less settled for a working basis, as follows :

(i) Indus Valley Art	C. 2500-1500 B. C.
(ii) Vedic Civilization	C. 2000 B. C.—C. 1000 B. C.
(iii) Mahājanapada Period	C. 1200 B. C.—600 B. C.
(iv) Śaiśunāga-Nanda Period	C. 600 B. C.—326 B. C.
(v) Maurya Period	C. 325 B. C.—184 B. C.

(vi) Śuṅga Period	C. 184 B. C.—72 B. C.
(vii) Kāṇva Dynasty	C. 72 B. C.—27 B. C.
(viii) Bactrian (Bāhlīika-Yavana) and Indo-Greeks (Madraka-Yavana)	C. 250 B. C.—150 B. C.
(ix) Kshaharāta Śaka-Kshatrapa	C. 1st century B. C.—C. 390 A. D.
(x) Sātavāhanas	C. 200 B. C. upto 200 A. D.
(xi) Śaka-Kushāṇas	C. 80 B. C.—2nd century A. D.
(xii) Ikshvākus of Āndhradeśa	C. 3rd century A. D.
(xiii) Gupta Period	C. 319 A. D.—600 century A. D.
(xiv) Chālukya Period	C. 550 A. D.—642 A. D.
(xv) Rāshṭrakūṭa Period	C. 753 A. D.—973 A. D.
(xvi) Pallava Dynasty	C. 600 A. D.—750 A. D.
(xvii) Chola Dynasty	C. 900-1053 A. D.
(xviii) Pāṇḍya Dynasty	C. 1251 A. D.—1310 A. D.
(xix) Hoysala Dynasty	C. 12-13th centuries
(xx) Vijayanagara Dynasty	C. 1336-1565 A. D.
(xxi) Gaṅga Dynasty and also Kesarīs of Orissa	C. 11-13th centuries
(xxii) Pālas of Magadha and Senas of Bengal	C. 9-12th centuries
(xxiii) Gurjara Pratihāras	750—950 A.D.
(xxiv) Chandellas	900—1000 A.D.
(xxv) Solaṅkīs	765 A.D.—1200 A.D.
(xxvi) Gahaḍavālas	1085—1200 A.D.

Art movements originate, gather strength and continue so as to mingle their strands with the successive ones and, therefore, one need not insist on the fixity of political dates, which only offer a satisfactory working basis. The period from about the sixth century B. C. to the beginning of the era may be termed as 'Pre-classical'; that from the first century A. D. to the time of Harsha (seventh century) as the 'Classical age', which forms the most important of the formative periods of Indian culture in its multiple facets of art, literature and life. This was followed by what is known as the 'Medieval period' (700-1200 A. D.), which may be divided into 'Early' (700-900 A. D.) and 'Late' (900-1200 A.D.).

On this long road of time, Indian art travelled with steady strides leaving behind glorious foot-prints as demonstrated by the numerous monuments spread in all directions. The story of this art may be regarded as being both simple and complex—simple because a thread of unity permeates it, complex because it is a skein of many strands. An art historian of India should have the discriminative

insight to unravel the tangled yarns of local, regional and national forms, styles, decorations, influences and contents.

PROVENANCE—Provenance and chronology form the main rafters of art edifice. They are rooted in factual data which should be carefully collected and considered in a study of Indian art. The find-places of most of the monuments and objects under study are usually known and recorded. In the case of sculptures and architectural pieces, the colour and formation of stone is a reliable guide. For example, in the Indus Valley white limestone of the Kirthar hills was used for making statuettes; in the Mauryan art hard-grained buff Chunar sandstone; in Kushāṇa art of Mathura red sandstone; in Gandhāra art bluish schist or slate-stone; in Gupta art reddish sandstone of local varieties; in Pāla art usually black basalt; in Chālukyan art yellowish sandstone; in the stūpas of Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda etc. local whitish limestone of the Andhra country which has often been described as marble.

DATES—The problem of dates is to be based on the data supplied by the Inscriptions engraved on the monuments, e. g. a Stūpa, a temple, *śilāpaṭṭa*, or on the pedestal of an image, or statue. When such information is lacking, the style becomes our guide for assigning a date to an art object. In the case of systematic archæological excavations, the relative strata as defined by the inscriptions, coins and associated finds indicate the sequence of chronology. The lever of an objective study is to settle the period or dating of an art object, and to place it in its proper historical and cultural background when that particular object was produced. Thus, the find-place, date and style give us the full cultural interpretation of an art object.

MEANING—The formal study of art as outlined above reaches its fulfilment in the discovery of the meaning of which an art object stands as concrete symbol. According to the Indian theory of æsthetics, art as well as poetry is comprised of four elements, namely, (i) *Rasa*, (ii) *Artha*, (iii) *Chhandas* and (iv) *Śabda*. *Rasa* is the soul of all art, a spiritual quality enshrining its permanent value. It is the basic, essential and inscrutable Divine element in creation as well as art. *Rasa* is the aggregate of human emotions (*Bhāva*). Both art and poetry aim to express the emotional contents of the human mind. The theorists speak of eight or nine *Rasas* with their respective sentiments or emotions. All high art evokes an emotion in the heart of the connoisseur. The poet and the artist begin by conceiving an emotion to be expressed through word or a material medium (*Rūpa*).

The next step is to select a meaning or theme (*Artha*) as the vehicle of the particular *Rasa* intended to be expressed. The extent of meaning of Indian art comprises the vast pantheon of gods and goddesses, each one of whom is the

symbol of celestial and earthly powers that are in the Universe, and really stand for the manifestations of one Divinity. The great Purāṇic legends or myths are cast in the pattern of a conflict between the powers of light and of darkness. Indian art and poetry illustrate these themes. Great Beings (*Mahāpurusha*) like the Buddha, Mahāvīra and other heroic kings of heavenly charater stand for the principle of light contending against the forces of evil described as Māra, Vṛitra, Tripura, Mahisha, etc. Without its meaning Art is blind. It is eloquent with its sense and purpose when properly understood as those who created it and for whom it was created both understood it. Meaning has great value to appreciate fully the cultural purpose of Indian art. The quest of meaning leads us to the study of art symbolism, e. g. in the case of *Chakra, Pūrṇa-Ghaṭa, Svastika,* Garuḍa, Nāga, Yaksha, etc.

Having fixed the subject or theme the artist makes a choice of his rhythm (*Chhanda, Tāla, Laya*), or measure (*Mātrā*) which determines the various elements of beauty as symmetry, harmony, grouping, proper relationship of the main figure with its constituents and composition (*Saṁpuñjana*). An important branch of Indian art thus relates to iconometry (*Tālamāna*). The cosmos with its individual objects presents a measured model for the artist which he accepts to be imaged not so much objectively as through his mind (*Chitta*) or meditation (*Dhyāna*), each art object thus becoming an individual creation.

The last element of art is the expression of an idea in a concrete form on the plane of matter. What the artist has thought takes form in art. This is *Śabda* for poetry and *Rūpa* for visual arts. Sculpture, painting, architecture, etc. have their several media, but they are similar in being concrete symbols of ideas. Their language is direct, making an appeal to the mind through the senses.

VALUE OF MIND—Herein lies the supreme value of art, viz. that it is a bridge between the worlds of mind and of matter. Art may be defined as the expression of an idea in visual form in a beautiful manner. Art is mind made manifest in matter. It is this quality which makes art so human and so intimate to the soul of man. As music through the ear, so visual arts through the eye reach the inner heart and generate sublimating vibrations of a subtle nature. The true connoissuer (*Rasika, Sahṛidaya, Vichakshaṇa*) lives in the aroma of art and sips deep of its ambrosia. This faculty of the heart to register an æsthetic shock from art is called *Saṁvega.*

True art is ever fresh as a recurrent session of beauty. Its charm does not fade and its æsthetic appeal comes back to the mind in ever rolling waves. Art is a human creation (*Mānushī Śilpa*), but nearest to the Divine creation (*Deva Śilpa*).

It is the divine inspiration in the heart of the artist which invests works with heavenly beauty of both Meaning (*Artha*) and Form (*Rūpa*).

DECORATIVE ELEMENTS—An objective analysis of the contents of Indian art acquaints us with its decorative elements and the themes depicted. From the very outset Indian artists took delight in decorative designs and formal elements both taken from nature and invented by man. Geometrical (*Rekhākṛitī*), floral (*Patra-vallarī*), and animal (*Īhāmṛiga*) designs were freely introduced in natural and conventionalised forms. Sometimes they are used with great effect as accessory figures, or framing borders, or for filling space, or for the sole purpose of lending beauty to an object. Pottery decorations especially were an important element of protohistoric ceramic art. Later during the historical periods the symbols on punch-marked and tribal coins and sealings draw upon a rich *repertoire* of designs. In the Gupta period, scroll work (*Patra-latā*) made very intricate and deeply engraved when on stone as on the Dhamekh *Stūpa* at Sarnath, became almost universal. It was believed to have the efficacy of warding off evil and plain surface was considered to be ugly. A panel with conventionalised scroll (*Patra-rachanā*) was taken to be as sacred as a Divine Image (*Archā*). This attitude bore its rich fruit in the development of the decorative element in Gupta art, painting, architecture and sculpture.

CULTURAL LIFE—A second feature of Indian art is the place taken by the cultural life of the people including both royalty and common man. Indian art offers a commentary to its literature in depecting the material life of the people in a rich and vivid form. It is possible to reconstruct a whole history of Indian costumes and hair-styles from sculptures, paintings and clay figurines; especially the last, which, owing to their special democratic nature, present a rich typological cross-section of the society. The great *Stūpas* of Bharhut and Sanchi, of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā, stand out as monuments on which the Life of the community is faithfully depicted in its manifold aspects. It should be recognised that Indian art has moved close to its literature and to the actual life of the society through the ages. Its value as a record of the culture of the people is being now recognised.

CULT MATERIAL—Further, the great religious movements which inspired and moved the lives of the people at different periods from one end of the country to the other, have found a rich documentation in the art panels, which sometimes are more informative than even literary records. For example, the Yaksha and Nāga cults on the early *Stūpas* of Bharhut and Sanchi, and also in Mathurā art, speak an eloquent language. A precise analysis of the elements of folk-art is needed to grasp the full scope of the art forms inspired by them. Another instance is the Uttarakuru tradition depicted with zest at Bhājā, Bharhut, Sanchi, etc. With it

are linked several motifs, such as, *Mithuna, Kalpa-vṛiksha, Kalpa-latā* of which the carved panels are illustrative of the epics and the Jātaka descriptions. Various ornaments, costly fabrics, superior wines, toilet articles, and Man and Woman, are shown coming out from the tendrils or low bent boughs of trees or meandering creepers. These were Wish-fulfilling motifs which fired the imagination of the people. The *Kalpa-vṛiksha* became the arch-symbol of the cult of Tree-worship or the adoration of arboreal deities (*Rukkha-devatā-maha*).

SYMBOLICAL THEMES—Indian art truly reflects the deep relationship between ideas and life. It fulfilled a real need. If the wide gamut of life is mirrored anywhere it is truly so in the case of art. A special feature which enriches the meaning and purpose of art was to present a synthesis or mingling of the cults dear to the common man with the higher religion of the Buddha, Mahāvīra, Śiva or Vishṇu with all the details of their lives and deeds of glory. Here metaphysical ideas were freely invoked to inspire concrete forms.

BUDDHA—The story of Buddha in stone and colour is woven out of a series of symbolical patterns, irrespective of the fact whether they would hold good for a historical person. His descent from the Tushita heaven, dream of Māyā seeing a white elephant, Buddha's oblique birth from the mother's side, his seven steps, the first bath, presentation of the four cups, miracle of fire and water, taming of the elephant Nalagiri, vision of Thousand Buddhas, *Dharma-Chakra*, visit of Indra, ascent to the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods (*Trayastriṁśa-Deva-svarga*) and coming down by the three ladders of gold, silver and copper—these appearing as part of art are in reality symbols of the metaphysical pattern of Buddha's life, pointing to the concept of the Superman (*Mahāpurusha*).

ŚIVA—Similarly Śiva was depicted from the Indus Valley to historical times either as an emblem (*Liṅga-vigraha*) or in human form (*Purusha-vigraha*) and both are deeply rooted in the metaphysical thought of the religious tradition of India. The folk-elements have been freely accepted but transformed. Sublimation of forms as a vehicle of ideas gives delight both to the Indian seer and artist. For example, Śiva is shown as Paśupati, Ardhanārīśvara, Naṭarāja, Kāmāntaka, Gaṅgādhara, Chandraśekhara, Yogeśvara, Yamāntaka, Harihara, Dakshiṇāmūrti, Jyotirliṅga, Nandīśvara, Umāmaheśvara, Daśamukhānugraha, Pañchabrahma, Ashṭamūrti, Mṛituñjaya etc. These are verily the alphabet of a religious language at its best. Its key is preserved in Indian tradition and the secret of art as that of religion may be found to be the same, when rightly unveiled.

DEVA—Indian art may be said to be a dedication at the feet of the Divine (*Deva*). All the *Devas* abide in the *Stūpa* and the Temple (*Deva-Gṛiha*). The *Harmikā* on the top of the dome and the cella (*Garbha-gṛiha*) both are alike the seats of the

gods (*Deva-sadana*). Forms may differ but the meaning is the same. An array of subsidiary deities (*Vyantara-Devatā*) like Gandharva, Apsaras, Kumbhāṇḍa, Nāga, Yaksha, Nadī-Devatā, Siddha, Vidyādhara etc., stands integrated in each religious pantheon as the differentiated manifestations of an ultimate and supreme Divine Power (*Deva*).

UNITY OF FORM AND MEANING—A study of Indian art is thus possible at several levels—fixing of the archeaological context, technique of production, style, chronology, culture, and above all, its meaning. As in Plato, so in Indian æsthetics, idea or meaning (*Artha*) is of sublime value ; the form (*Rūpa*) no less important from the æsthetic point of view is the vehical of ideas. Form is the body and meaning is the soul of art. Kālidāsa has paid the loftiest homage to both by comparing them with the Cosmic Creator and the Divine Mother, the Universal Parents, who preside over creation, and also inspire human art, both being inseparable :

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥ (Raghuvaṁśa 1. 1)

The meaning (*artha*) belongs to the region of the unmanifest (*amūrta*) and the form (*rūpa*) to the manifest (*mūrta*). Both are the two aspects of Divine Vishṇu. The one called a higher (*arūpa = paramarūpa*) and the other a lower (*viśvarūpa = mūrtarūpa, Vishṇu P.* 6. 7. 54). The whole cosmos with its created objects is governed by the higher principle of meaning, defined as *Bhāvanā*, i.e. the emotions, feelings and sentiments in the hearts of men. Such emotions exist at three levels, viz. (1) a cosmic transcendental meaning (*Brahma-bhāvanā*) ; (2) the feelings and emotions of the highest gods upto human beings and lower beings (*Karma-bhāvanā*), which is the same as 'life' or culture ; (3) a union of the above two (*Ubhaya-bhāvanā*), in which divine knowledge (*Brahma*) and human activity (*Karma*) are revealed, as in Rāma, Kṛishṇa, Buddha, Mahāvīra.

The discovery of the subtle meaning of art forms only leads to full æsthetic enjoyment according to the Indian theory, which holds the form without meaning (*adhyātma-bhāva*) to be unholy. The human mind cannot remain without applying itself to one or the other of the manifest forms. It is therefore redeeming to concentrate on the spiritual or divine purpose underlying the form. Just as fire entering a house burns it, so does thought inspired by the beauty of the image removes darkness and fills the mind (*Chitta*) with light (*Vishṇu P.* 6. 7. 74). Both the artist and the critic of art (*Rasika*) can approach real art only through meditation (*Dhyāna*) in order to have the proper aesthetic response.

An Icon, primarily and in completeness, intended for its religious, i.e. spiritual purpose, is a symbol of the divine or supreme reality.

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CHAPTER II

2. PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

The art of prehistoric man is found at many places in the world and also in India. Its precise dating is a matter of difficulty but it is marked by certain primitive features giving it a separate entity to be recognised as the first link in the story of human art. The prehistoric culture belonged to men living in Stone Age. In India, as elsewhere, it has two broad divisions, viz. Old Stone Age and New Stone Age, with a probable Middle Stone Age between the two. The first is known as Palaeolithic, the second as Neolithic and the intermediate one as Mesolithic.

PALAEOLITHIC ART—In the Palaeolithic Age man lived by digging out roots and hunting animals for food. For this he made use of tools and implements of stone of a crude and rough variety, found in association with fossils of animals now extinct. The struggle that palaeolithic man put to master his surroundings was very hard and long-drawn. Still he had the capacity to think and develop which made him build a culture.

There are several palaeolithic sites located in Madras, Orissa, Hyderabad, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. From the site of Attirampakkam in Chingleput district of Madras thousands of hand-axes have been picked. Similarly Khyad on the Malaphrabhā in Dharwar, Mungi near Paithan in Hyderabad, are other sites where palaeolithic man once flourished. He lived in caves and rock-shelters near rivers, anxious for national protection and constant water supply. He mostly used quartzite (Hindi, *Būjhā*) for making tools in the form of cores and flakes obtained by fracturing the rough stone.

In north-west India in the Sohan Valley, a small tributary of the Indus (*Sushomā* of the Ṛigveda) and also in Kashmir *Karewas* traces of the earliest lithic industry of man in India have been found both as pebble tools and flakes.

MESOLITHIC—The Middle Stone Age was intermediary between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic Ages. It is represented by Microlithic tools of very small size. The tiny tools were fixed singly or collectively to a handle to make them more effective. Such tools may be identified with *śilīmukha* of Sanskrit literature. The material consists of jasper, agate, carnelian, chalcidony, quartz and flint. The types of tools include blades, sometimes serreted (Hindi, *dāntedār*), crescents, triangles, points, scrapers etc. Microlithic sites spread in the Sabarmati valley in Gujrat, Narmada valley and along the lower Godavari. In the last region microliths were

Fig. 1

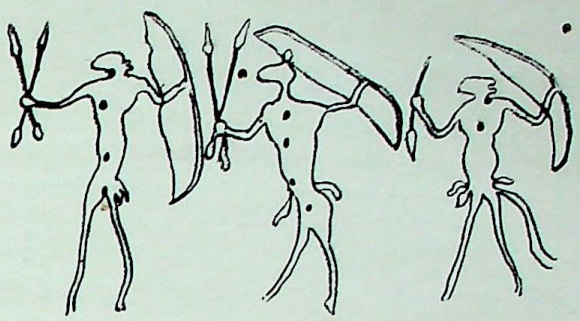


Fig. 3

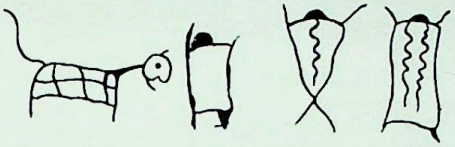


Fig. 2

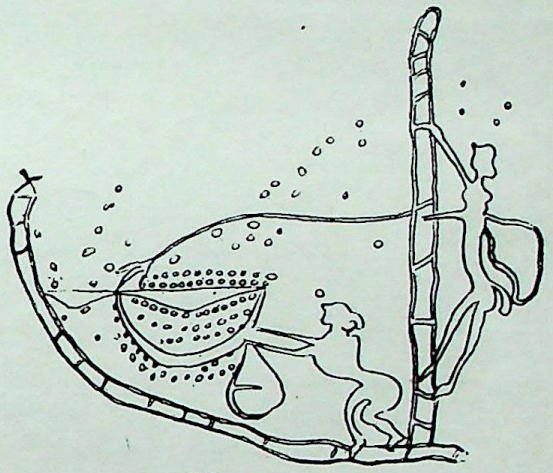


Fig. 4

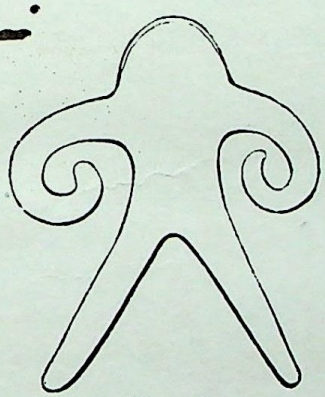


Fig. 7

Fig. 6

Fig. 5

Fig. 9

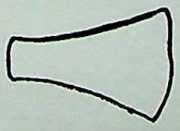


Fig. 8

PLATE II

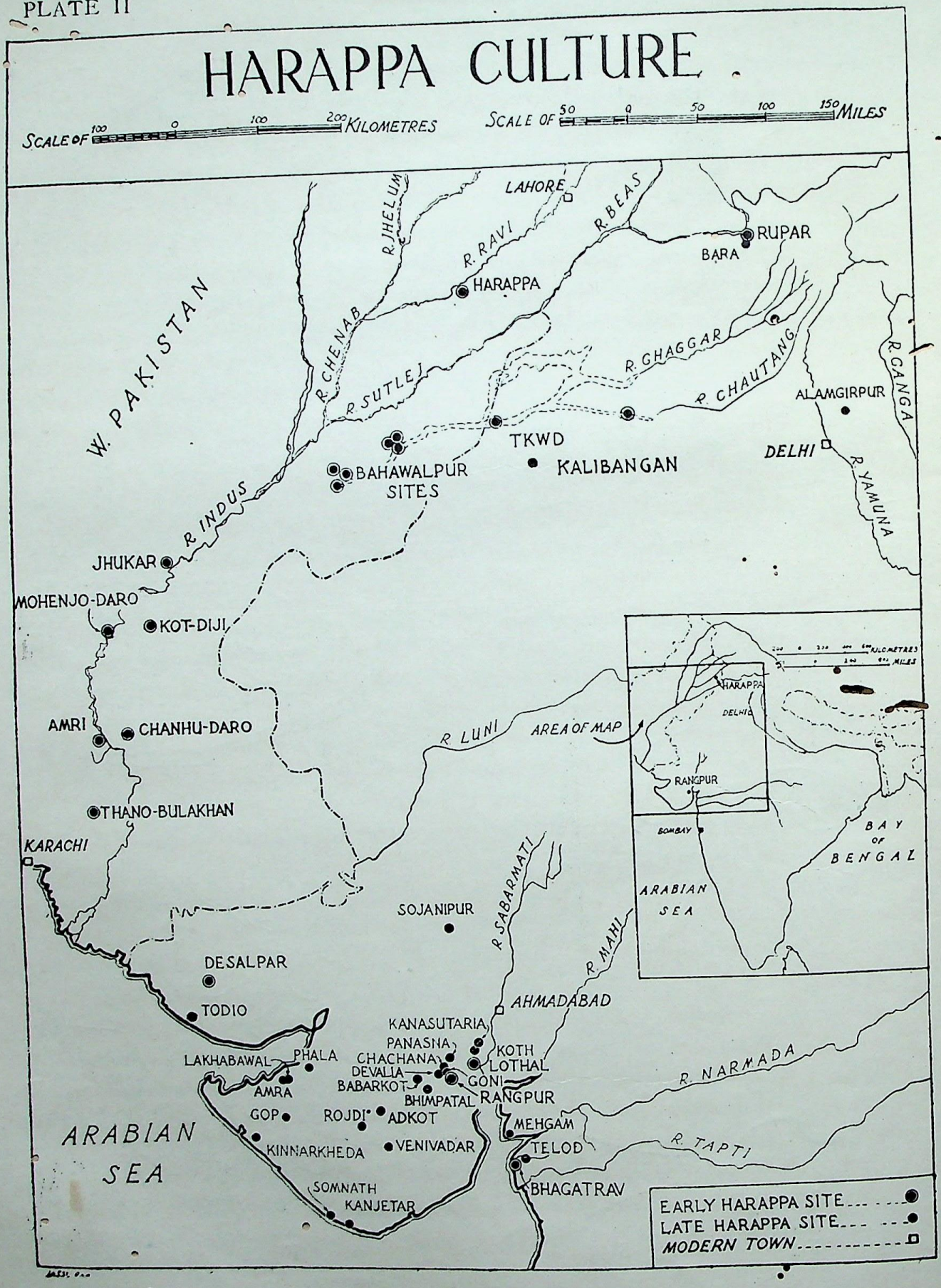


Fig. 10a

found in association with coarse hand-made pottery. From the chronological point of view microlithic industry went hand in hand with the neolithic and at times projected into the historic period. At Brahmagiri microlithic and neolithic cultures were found related to early historical times.

NEOLITHIC—The Old Stone Age culture had a very long duration dating back to about half a million years and continuing up to about ten to seven thousand years B. C. As against this the Neolithic age had a much shorter duration of a few thousand years and therefore linked with the earliest historic cultures of India. The Neolithic man was primarily producing food by an agricultural industry. He was using hand-made pottery, specially utensils for cooking. The Neolithic implements were ground and polished. The tools included celts, axes, adzes and hammer-stones. The polished handled stone axe is the distinguishing tool of the Neolithic man. In the Ṛigveda there are two significant words, viz. *aśman-mayī vāśī* and *āyasī vāśī*. The real significance of these words does not seem to have been understood. *Vāśī* was a kind of adze from which the Hindi word *basūlā* or *basūlī* is derived. The stone adzes seem to have been stone celts of the Neolithic man used for cutting (वाशीभिस्तक्षताश्मन्मयीभिः RV. X. 101. 10). The copper celt (*āyasī vāśī*) was a weapon of Tvashṭā (वाशीमेको बिभर्ति हस्त आयसीमन्तर्देवेषु; RV. VIII. 29. 3). The Neolithic man did not know the use of metals and he was using only stone tools. In South India he was followed by people using iron. In North India, copper-using culture succeeded the Neolithic man of which Mohenjodaro is the best example. Here is a transitional stage in which the use of stone celts is found together with that of copper celts. The Aryans in the Ṛigveda also were using both of these but mostly the copper tools, as in the Ṛigveda Tvashṭā, the divine architect (*antar deveshu*), is credited with having in hand a copper celt. The same god is associated with a copper axe (*āyasa paraśu*, RV. X. 53. 9.) Those who were armed with such handled copper celts were known as *vāśī-mantaḥ*.

The polished stone celts and axes were tools typical in the Neolithic age. These have been obtained at several sites like Hamirpur, Chhatarpur, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Santhal Pargana, Singhbhum, Darjeeling, Nadia, Naga Hills in Assam, Raichur in Hyderabad, Chittaldrug in Mysore, and Anantpur, Bellary, Guntur and Tanjore in Madras. In the North-West also some specimens were found on the banks of the Indus. In south India Bellary District, Mysore and Hyderabad were the focal centres of Neolithic culture. The excavations at Brahmagiri brought to light a polished stone axes between the beginning of the first millenium B. C. and 300 B. C. The authors of this culture were using both Neolithic celts and microlithic tools at the same time.

The Neolithic man was generally not acquainted with the use of metals. After him came iron in South India and copper and bronze in the North. His

pottery was hand-made and mostly coarse in gray fabric. The Neolithic peoples in India were food-producers with a settled life, whereas the Palaeolithic were food-gatherers wandering from place to place as hunters in pursuit of animals.

The tool implements of these peoples form a considerable material. From the art point of view they just demonstrate the craft ability of the primitive man who had begun to use his hand and thus laid the foundation of crafts for succeeding ages.

ROCK-PAINTINGS—The man using the stone axe tools used to live and wander in river valleys and open forests. In the next stage man learnt to live in rocky cave-shelters where he diverted himself by making drawings on the walls of the caves which are known as Rock Paintings. These paintings were done with a kind of soft red stone or haematite, and from this they are known to the local people as *Rakat-Ki-putariyān* (रकत की पुतरियाँ, *Skt. Raktaputtalikā*)

There are four principal centres where such paintings have been discovered, as follows :—

1. Mahadeo Hills round Pachmarhi, in Madhya Pradesh. Paintings in four series, superimposed over one another.
2. Raigarh paintings of Singhanpur and Kabra Pahar (ten miles south-east of Raigarh city) in Madhya Pradesh.
3. Mirzapur area in the Sone valley of the Kaimur Range (Skt. *Kirmīra* name of an *asura*). Here are rock shelters at Likhunia, Kohbar, Mehraria, Bhaldaria and Bijaigarh.
4. Manikpur in Banda District.

The largest number of prehistoric rock paintings have been found in the Mahadeo Hills with Pachmarhi as its centre. No less than fifty rock-shelters contain paintings, some of them known as Dorothi Deep, Mont Rosa, Mahadeo, Jambudwip and Dhaniakhal are within five miles of Pachmarhi. Others at about 20 to 40 miles distance are Tamia, Jhalia etc. Adamgarh is two and a half miles from Hoshangabad.

The paintings are numerous and in the opinion of some writers are rich like the Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi furnishing a record of the many-sided cultural life of the people who made the drawings in red and white ochre colours. The super-imposed drawings show sequences in four series.

Ist Series : Schematic figures only, divided into early and late. The paintings of the early first series are conventionalised human and animal figures in red

and cream colours. They show square-shaped bodies with triangular heads, the bust being filled by zig-zag or wavy lines, probably representing some kind of bark garment. [Fig. 1]. These paintings are superimposed by other figures and are scarce.

The later stage of the first series shows stick-like figures with a triangular head. The cream colour is interlined with red to depict hair or head. With the stick-like figures also appear some in pink with triangular head and square body but with a single wavy line within the bust. [Fig. 2] These also belong to the same stage.

2nd Series: Paintings in grey or cream, crude but naturalisitic, also divided into early and late, the early second series being very crude have only the rudiments of naturalism. The figures have elongated necks, wavy hair, generally featureless heads, thin sinuous legs and fringed skirts. In the late second series some kind of grouping begins to appear and bows and arrows which were scarce in the first series now become common. [Fig. 3]. Metallic arrow-heads which begain to be used by figurines of the first series still continued in the second and to that metallic spear-heads were now added as of common use. The people were hunters, hunting wild beasts, sometimes a tiger, a huge porcupine, sambhar both male and female and even elephant and oxen. Sometimes the hunting folk enjoyed a thrilling dance holding bows and arrows and using animal masks. Honey-taking with a bamboo ladder from high trees or overhanging cliffs was a favourite pursuit of the hunters of the second series which continued throughout the following third series also. [Fig. 4]. The rock paintings in Mirzapur area coincide with the hunting and dancing figures of the second series of the Mahadeo Hills.

3RD AND 4TH SERIES—The cultural scene changes from primitive hunters to well-armed warriors and mounted horsemen in battle scenes where archers and swordmen are engaged in fierce action. Armed cattle raiders are also seen. Besides the homelife of the people is also depicted, e. g. a man playing on a harp; a woman pounding roots and grinding grain; huts with women inside; men and women dancing in groups and pairs; men playing drums and a double pipe, entertained by a performing monkey and a dancing bear. Cattle and birds of various kinds including goose and peacock and also pigs and dogs are represented—virtually a cross-section of the life of the people. In the Adamgarh Quarry near Hoshangabad one of the rock-shelters shows a very large elephant which is the oldest and may belong to the late 2nd series. In the late 3rd and early 4th series of the Mahadeo Hills we find bun hair-dressing, loin-cloth ending in a tail between the legs, bow and quiver of arrows, straight swords, leaf-shaped dagger and round shield. The Mahadeo Hills paintings are mostly in difficult rocky jungles far from the main lines of communication

and so also the Singhanpur paintings. The people there were using microliths, pottery and metal-headed spears. There are a few mythological figures—a heroic personage in a *vimāna* or sky-chariot and a gaint who leads a tiger with a rope like a pet dog (found in a shelter in the Mahadeo Hills group). [Fig. 5]. Another subject shows a male person resisting a lion or tiger on one side and a wild bull on the other while the cattle thus protected are moving below. No religious purpose seems to underlie the paintings which depict scenes of encounters with wild beasts, dances, domestic life and battle.

II. Singhanpur and Kabra Pahar Paintings near Raigarh, in rock-shelters; the first about 3 miles from Meharpalik station on the Bengal-Nagpur Rly. and Kabra Pahar about 10 miles south-east of Raigarh city. The paintings are in dark red and varying shades of red. Square-shaped men are seen including animals like wild oxen. One thing may be noted, viz. that the square body of the figurines in the Mahadeo Hills are filled with vertical wavy lines whereas at Singhanpur the figures have only a single or a double wavy line.

III. Paintings in the Mirzapur area. Whereas Singhanpur-Raigarh rock paintings fall within the Mahanadi valley, those of Pachmarhi (Mahadeo Hills) in the Narmada valley, the paintings of Mirzapur district belong to the area of the Sone valley. These three rivers form a well defined boundary of hilly forest area well suited for the protected habitation of primitive men, who appear to be the ancestors of the Śabaras and Nishādas.

The paintings in the Sone valley show hunting and dancing figures and a stage of culture as that of the painters of the 2nd series in the Mahadeo Hills. The local name for a rock-shelter is *Darī*, as in Likhunia Darī which is on the bank of the hilly stream Garai. The subject of the paintings is the capture of wild elephants by horsemen with the help of a tame elephant. The horse-riders carry a long pointed spear. Human figures with a square body or stick-like figures are found here showing that they were alike the figures of the 1st & 2nd series at Pachmarhi. In a remarkable painting we see a wounded wild boar with its mouth open in pain.

IV. Manikpur in Banda District. Cave paintings show horsemen archers and a person seated in a wheelless bullock cart. In point of time they should be referred to the 3rd series of paintings in Mahadeo Hills.

One of the Adamgarh shelters shows an animal like a giraffe with a very long neck which has remained a puzzle.

MORI ROCK PAINTINGS— Recently a large group of thirty rock-shelters in village Mori, District Mandsor, M. P. has been surveyed, showing the ceiling and

walls of the shelters decorated with paintings in red ochre, depicting animals, dancing human figures and pastoral scenes, generally assignable to Series 3rd and 4th of D. H. Garden for the Panchmarhi Hills. Amongst geometrioal designs some are quite important, namely, a four armed cross inside a circle, an eight-spoked wheel, a solar orb with multiple rays, houses with gabled roof, a crude country cart a running *Sarvatobhadra* pattern intricately made out of *Swastika* design, and above all an eight-petalled lotus filled by a central design consisting of four *pīpal* leaves joined at their tip end in the middle of the motif, which partly occurs in the Indus Valley also (Indian Archaeology, 1957-58, p. 27, Fig. 14. 1-4.).

ROCK ENGRAVINGS—Whereas paintings are found in rock-shelters, engravings appear on smooth rock surfaces open to rain and weather. They are more widely distributed than the paintings. A number of rock engravings have come to light on the middle Indus, some 6 miles south of Attock in localities named Mandori, Gandab and Ghariala, showing human and animal figurines, depicting riding horses, camels and elephants engaged in warfare and men armed with weapon. At Sambalpur in Orissa, Raichur in Hyderabad, and at Bellary, groups of rock engravings have been found. Most of these engravings are nothing better than bruisings.

COPPER CULTURE—The neolithic man using ground and polished stone axes was gradually replaced by food-producing agriculturists. A cultural succession from the primitive hunting communities has been observed at a number of sites from the Narmada to the Godavari, e.g. Maheshwar (ancient Māhishamatī) on the north bank of the Narmada, Navda Toli, Jorwe (Ahmadnagar district), etc. showing post-neolithic features as indicated by painted pottery, use of microliths, copper articles and to an extent the older stone axes continuing to be used at several centres. A flake blade industry, the painted ware and fine copper articles seem to be moving to the chalcolithic phase which we see at its best in the Indus Valley. The evidence is far from being complete, as the quantity of articles of copper found in the early culture of Western and Central India is sparse, but in Northern India in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa large copper hoards have come to light from as many as thirty sites. Axes and chisels which include all types of celts and bar-celts account for 154 examples as against 50 of other types—swords, daggers, spear-heads, harpoons [Fig. 6] and anthropomorphic or men-like figures [Fig. 7], besides the great hoard of 424 assorted copper celts found at Gungeria in Madhya Pradesh. There were two industrial areas producing articles of copper, one the Ganga-Jamuna Doab and the other the country round the Ranchi Plateau in Bihar.

The axes have a buttend somewhat narrower than the edge. The bar harpoons have a large spear-blade with two or three pairs of hooked barbs, sometimes with a

hole, and a lug above the stem. They are quite large ranging from 12 to 17 in. and cast in a mould with a stout mid-rib. Spear heads both simple and barbed and also copper swords and daggers have been found. In the Ṛigveda we find reference to a weapon named *Rishṭi* held on shoulders by the Marut-host with which it is tempting to identify these copper spearheads, just as the celts with *Āyasī vāśi* handled by Tvashṭā [Fig. 8], the barbed harpoons with the *Vajra* of Indra, and the axes with *Svadhiti* and *Paraśu* [Fig. 9].

Chronologically the latest phase of the stone age culture was drifting towards the historic period with a two-fold intervening cultural sequence, viz. the chalcolithic phase of the Indus Valley and the Aryan phase, mainly of the Gangetic Valley. The Indus Valley culture by itself presents an extensive phenomenon both in space and time, in which a higher type of material civilisation was fully developed with all the main types of arts and crafts evolved in a high degree. The evidence about the Aryan cultural remains is yet uncertain, but the copper implements specially from the Gangetic Valley from Bithur in Kanpur, Sartholi in Shahjahanpur, Rajpur Parsu near Hastinapur etc., point to some cultural sequence. A new type of pottery also forces itself on our attention. The Northern Black Polished Ware known as N. B. P. with widely scattered find-places punctuating the limits of the Mauryan empire has been rightly assigned to a period from 600 B. C. to 200 B. C. This was preceded by another kind of pottery known as the Painted Grey Ware. This type has been found both at Ahichchhatra and Hastinapur from the earliest levels. The pottery is wheel-made and decorated with groups of vertical lines, bands of sigmas, concentric circles, pot-hook spirals and arrangements of dots and dashes. Mostly the designs are painted on the outside of the bowls and dishes. In the case of the open flat bottomed dishes the inner surface also is painted with elaborate patterns. In the post-Harappan occupation levels at Rupar this pottery was found. The area between the Sutlej and the Jumna is full of sites producing the Painted Grey Ware. Like the N. B. P. ware the Painted Grey Ware and the Ochre Washed Ware also have a glossy finish. Most probably they belong to the blank period between the Indus Valley and the historical beginnings and thus may be assigned to the Vedic and post-Vedic ages.

CHAPTER III

3. INDUS VALLEY ART

INTRODUCTORY—Indus Valley Art has come to us in the mass of finds mainly at the two cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro (c. 2500 B.C.—1800 B.C.). Cunningham had touched the site of Harappa as early as 1878, but its proto-historic character was revealed for the first time in 1921 when D. R. Sahni was digging at Harappa on the Ravi and following him in 1922 R. D. Banerji struck upon the treasures of chalcolithic civilisation at Mohenjo-daro on the Indus. Marshall and his colleagues took up the work bringing to light an urban culture of vast dimensions, adjudged to be the most extensive in the pre-classical world. In time it stretched over a period of about a thousand years and in space over 1500 miles from Rupar (Kotla-Nihang, Ambala) to Rangpur and Lothal at the head of the Gulf of Cambay, District Ahmedabad, and still further upto Bhagat Rao on the river Kim in the Narmada valley. Latest exploratory survey has swelled the number of sites to about one hundred, the focal areas being those of Harappa, Sarasvati in Rajasthan desert with the big site of Kali Bangan on its bank, Mohenjo-daro and Chanhu-daro on the Indus, Rangpur and Lothal in Saurāshṭra.

This range of spatial expansion far exceeds the civilised areas on the Nile and in Mesopotamia which are about half its extent.

The one merit of this Copper civilisation is the general unanimity amongst scholars about its antiquity, a date paralleled with the Sargonic period of Akkad (c. 2350 B. C.), and the two ends of its temporal extension bracketed within c. 2500-1500 B. C. This dating has rather a firm basis, as shown by the discovery of about 30 Indus seals in the important cities of Mesopotamia at Ur, Kish, Lagash, Susa, Tell Asmar, etc. in the latter half of the third millenium B. C. Some seals were found in the Larsa period (1800 B. C.) and some from Kassite period (c. 1500 B. C.).

The discovery of the Indus Valley culture has done a miracle for both art and history of ancient India. It has pushed back at one stroke the beginning of civilised life in India by 20 centuries, i. e. from 600 B.C. to 2500 B.C. It has placed the Indian civilisation in a world-context making it as one of the other great civilisations of the ancient world like Crete, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Western Asia. It has further established the central position which India occupied within an extended geographical orbit with alround lines of communication to feed her economic life. The character of this civilisation shows it to be essentially urban, comprising a community of merchants and

rulers devoted to many fine arts and dependent for their economy on the labours of a toiling peasantry. They were entrenched within fortified citadels having rampart and gateways, most probably ruled by a central authority or political power vested in the king. A community of priests catering to the religious needs of the people is also indicated by the finds. The people excelled in methods of architectural planning of their capital cities, houses and roads, and an unusually developed sanitary system of bath-rooms and drains to which there is no parallel in the ancient world. The discovery of baked bricks in millions from kilns fired by forests of timber was the strongest point of the Indus Valley culture by which their architects built well planned cities the like of which are not seen anywhere else in Iran, Egypt or Western Asia. The beginnings of this civilisation are a little obscure and its end also seems to have come suddenly. The amazing fact about it is the uniformity of life, art and culture made visible to us by innumerable relics. About nine structural phases were exposed at Mohenjo-daro extending over a thousand years and the seals and other objects that came from the earliest levels (circa 2500 B. C.) do not seem to differ from those of the final phase (circa 1500 B. C.), although a certain degree of evolution inevitably exists. Such stolid conservatism was a quality ingrained in the soul of the people and had immense effect in building up a civilization which became so deeply rooted in the soil as to leave its lasting influence on the life and beliefs of the succeeding generations. The Harappa culture flourished for many centuries along with that of the Aryans and both co-existed in amity until the final clash ousted the Indus people from the field. It implied only the extinction of their political power, the people stuck to their homes, left to fight with a climate gradually turning inclement until deserts and waterless tracts overcame them. In its hey-day the culture of the Harappans was a blooming flower of divine fragrance or a ray of serene lustre. A flush of beauty permeates their life as seen in the religious cleanliness of their cities, homes and bodies. The ornaments of gold and silver, beads of elongated bright carnelian, agate, quartz etc. and gold-tipped beads, faience ornaments, miniature pottery as well as designs on pottery and the variety of steatite seals with vigorous animal figures and bold pictographic script—these are radiant with the creative genius of an inventive race. Taken together they leave a deep impression on the mind of every serious student of art and culture. The people knew the arts of agriculture, weaving, statuary, goldsmithy, bead-making, ivory-carving, shell-inlay, metal casting, writing, toy-making, pottery turned on wheel, painting designs in black and polychrome, using weights and measures, building, firing bricks, shaving, using wheeled conveyances, etc.

It is now generally admitted that the Harappa culture was born on the Indian soil. Its indigenous distinctive character is stamped on all classes of objects which

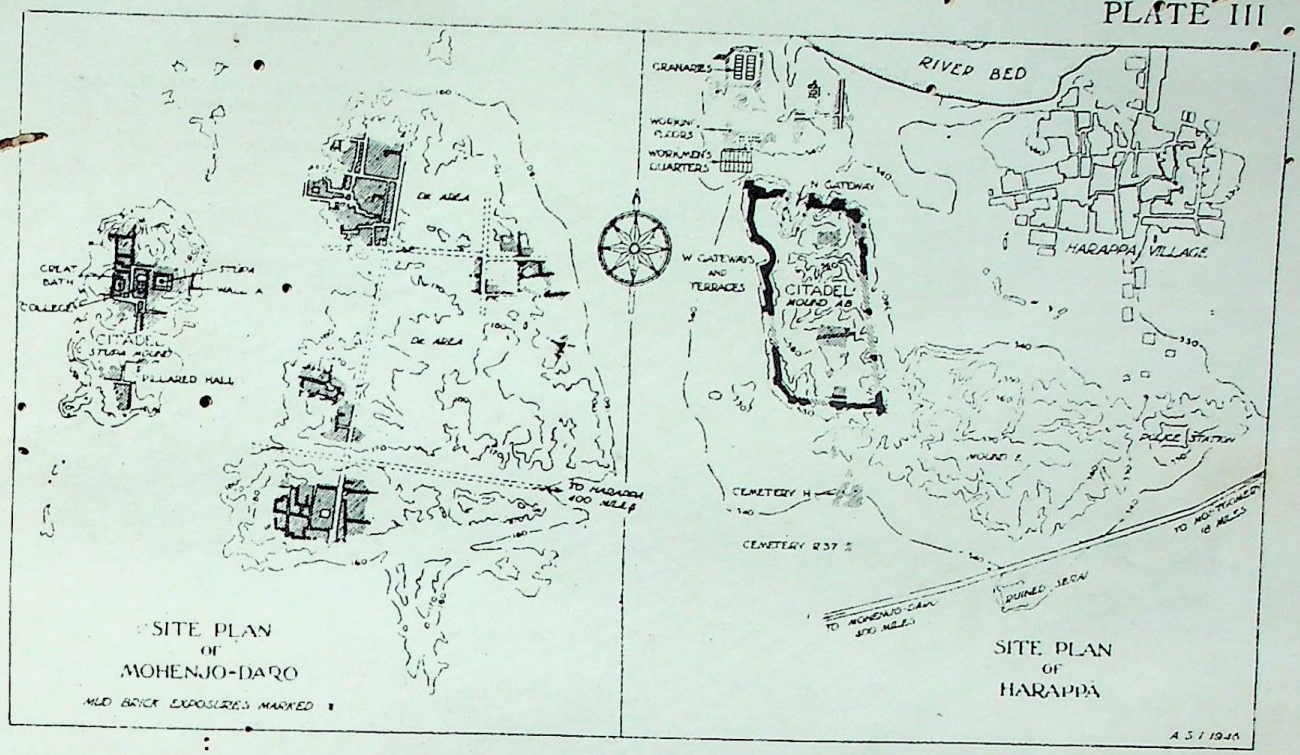


Fig. 10b

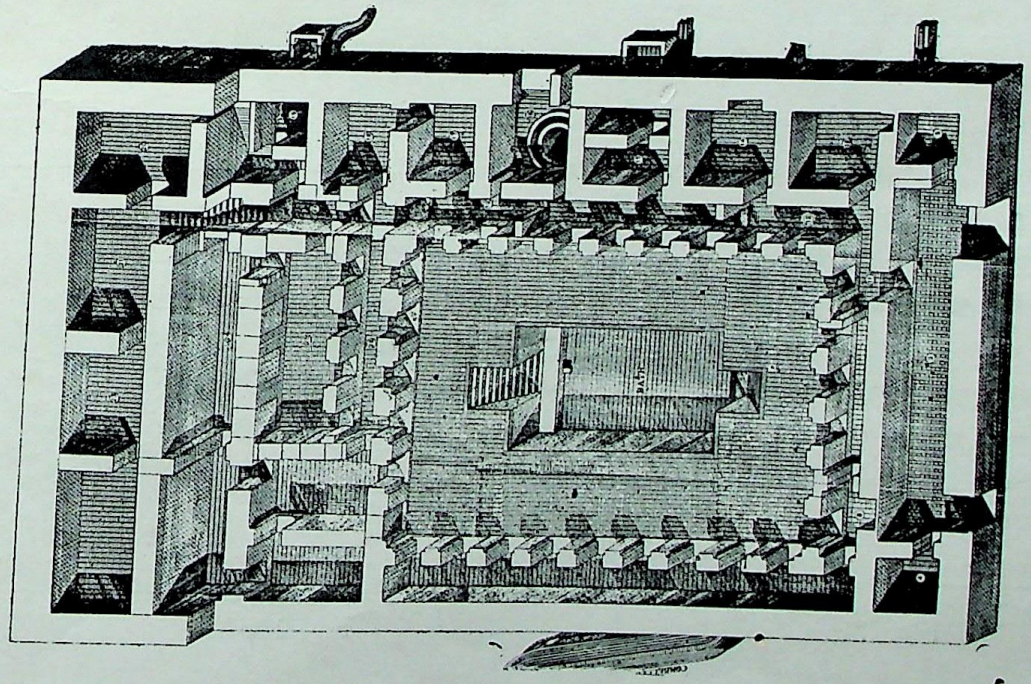


Fig. 10c

PLATE IV

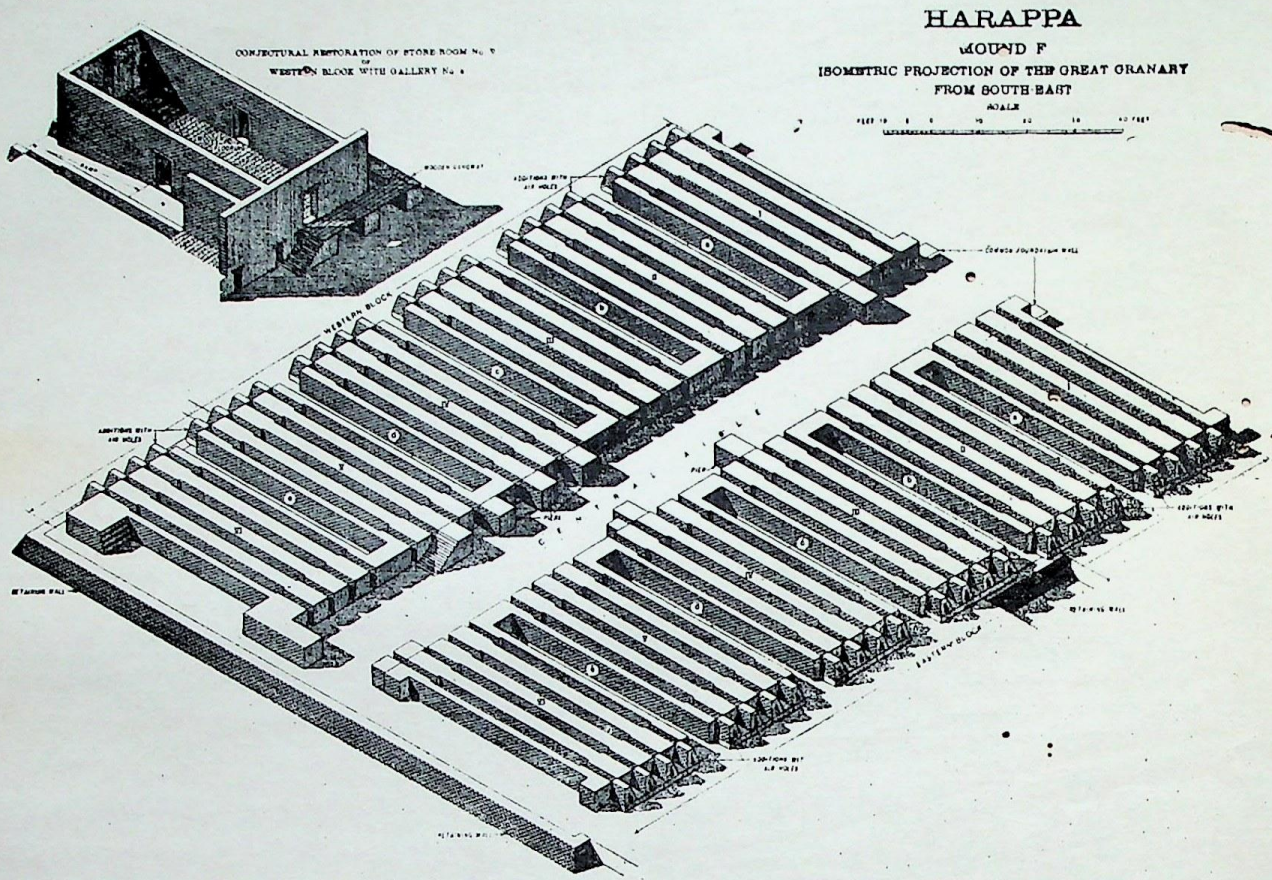


Fig. 10d

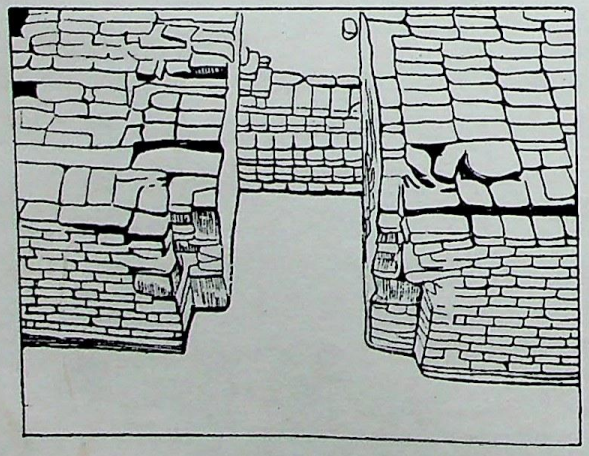


Fig. 11a

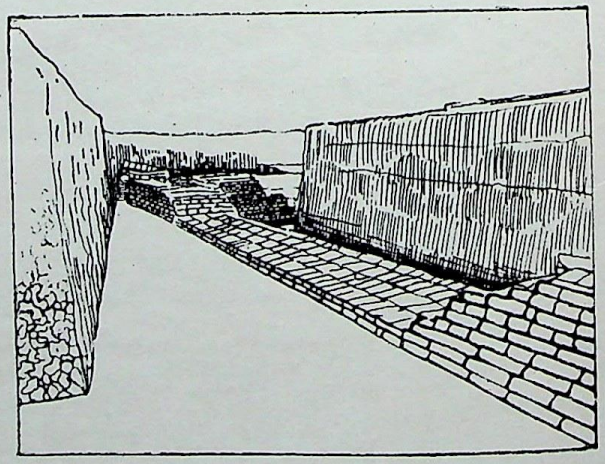


Fig. 11b

have been exposed. The problems created by the discovery of this culture are gradually accumulating for solution and the reply seems to be embedded in the story of Indian civilization itself both in the pre-and post-Harappan periods.

Architecture

Both Harappa and Mohenjo-daro were planned fortified cities. The citedal consisted of a high rampart wall (*Prākāra*) on broad foundation of mud-work 45 ft. wide (*Vapra*), city-gates (*Dvāra*) and a moat (*Parīkhā*) for which the Indus and the Ravi sufficed. The main city was enclosed inside these defences, giving a complete picture of what in the Vedic texts and later was known as *Pur*, a fortified city. The high acropolis is a parallelogram, 400-500 yards north-south by 200 300 yards east-west, with a perimeter of about 3 miles. The city-wall tapering upwards had bastions or towers at intervals (*Aṭṭālaka*) and was itself propped by a revetment of baked bricks 4 ft. wide on the outside (*Iṣhṭakā-Prākāra*).

The town inside was divided by broad streets regularly running at right angles both east-west and north-south dividing the city into blocks. The fixity of plan as laid down by the first builders continued throughout the history of Mohenjo-daro showing that the municipal authority enforcing the building laws extracted willing obedience from the people almost in a religious spirit. There was, however, some deviation in the later stages of the city building.

The main street at Mohenjo-daro (*Mahāpatha*) cleared for half a mile is 33 ft. wide, allowing several rows of wheeled carraiges to pass up and down. The main road intersected by some similar ones and by less wider streets from 12 to 9 ft. wide divided the whole city into blocks where smaller lanes and narrow alleys upto 4 ft. are also seen. There was no system of paving the streets with bricks excpting for the drain in the centre of the street.

The houses were arranged in rows mostly sited in the lanes, generally of 27 ft. × 29 ft. or double the size. They were provided with several rooms, a kitchen and a bath-room round a courtyard and were built in two storeys. The height of the brick-built walls as preserved in the streets is about 18 ft. and in the lanes 25 ft. The houses in the blocks are compact, but sometimes separated by narrow spaces of only 1 ft. The entrance was generally placed in the lane for privacy and safety. The principles of foundation, vertical walls in parallel courses, provision of roof probably on wooden beams and rafters, grille windows, niches and plastering were known. The art of masonary was plain and severe without much decoration. Only a few examples of alabaster and pottery grilles for windows have survived. An average door measured 3 ft. 4 inches in width and double in height and was closed by

shutters, now perished. Larger doors upto 7 ft. 10 in. also exist. The use of stone for building was practically absent. Even brick pillars were not much in use. Surviving columns are either square or rectangular and no round column has been found.

The floors in the rooms were without pavement, being only of beaten earth. The bath-rooms on the other hand received more careful attention as shown in the use of very finely joined masonary made impervious by the technique of using rubbed bricks. Inside the thick walls were pottery pipes for the flow of spill water from the bath-rooms of the upper storey, connected with the street-side drain of the ground-floor. This nice arrangement to ensure maximum cleanliness is a singular feature of Harappan culture.

Every good house had its well with plentiful supply of sweet water and brick-lined with wedged bricks (सूजापट्टी की ईंटें) made water tight and furnished with a high coping above the mouth of the well. The usual size is 3 ft. across but smaller ones of 2 ft. and larger of 7 ft. are also found.

The drainage system of the houses and the town gives proof of unusually thoughtful planning. Each street and lane had a good brick-paved channel made of bricks on two sides finely joined with mud-mortar, lime or gypsum, bigger drains (18″ wide) generally covered with loose stones and smaller ones with bricks. Tributary drains from each house connected with the street drain. The long drain was provided with man-holes at intervals with wooden covers and the whole system emptied itself in brick culverts (2½ ft. wide 4 or 5 ft. high) to carry away collected rain water. It appears that the cleanliness of the body had become a religious cult with the people. We are reminded of a reference in the Chhāndogya Upanishad mentioning the philosophy of life held by the Asuras believing that the physical body is *Ātmā* (Self), which should be embellished and provided with provisions, clothes and ornaments after death (असुराणां ह्येषोपनिषत् प्रेतस्य शरीरं भिक्षया वसनेनालंकारैरेति संस्कुर्वन्ति, Chh. Up. 8.8.5). This fits in squarely with the remains of Harappa culture which most likely belonged to the Asura race.

Besides the citadel on the Stūpa mound at Mohenjo-daro the Great Bath, an Assembly Hall, the so-called 'College Building' having numerous rooms with a courtyard and a grand staircase (all pointing to its character as a Royal Palace), and last of all the Granary exposed in Wheeler's excavation being similar to the elaborate Granary of Harappa, are other structures of monumental nature pointing to the architectural genius of their builders. The Assembly Hall rests on twenty pillars arranged in four rows of five each, some of them 25 ft. high, and is a spacious

building, 85 ft. square, seemingly of multipurpose use as a *Sabhā* and office of the city-guild similar to *Saṁthāgāra* of Buddhist times.

THE GREAT BATH (*Mahā-kuṇḍa*, 39 ft. x 23 ft. x 8 ft.) formed part of a big hydropathic establishment (180′ x 108′). This structure almost offers a commentary on the high standard of the Indus Valley people, so far as their religious and secular life is concerned. It was reached by flights of steps on two sides and surrounded by several rows of smaller double-storeyed rooms. It was supplied with fresh water taken from a nearby well, brick-lined with gypsum mortar. Its floor and wall have been made absolutely water-tight by three parallel vertical brick-walls on the four sides, the first is plastered on the outside and plugged on the inside by one inch thick coat of bitumen. The second and the third walls were connected to it by rammed mud and made compact as a single unit. The emptying outlet in one corner connects it with a big corbelled drain. On the terrace of the bath was a spacious corridor supported on pillars and having on three sides at its back various rooms and galleries serving as cloak rooms. [Fig. 10].

GRANARY—Both at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa a granary of massive construction (150′ x 75′) of solid masonary divided into 27 blocks with attached platforms for loading and unloading has come to light. A timber super-structure was provided above the blocks which were arranged in a manner to ensure proper airing. The round platforms near the granary at Harappa on which wooden mortars and pestles were placed for pounding corn into flour by toiling labourers. Thus the rich population was able to maintain itself with a constant supply of wheat flour from the labours of a peasantry.

From the monuments described above, we are in a position to form an idea of the political and economic organisation established in the citedal. For example, the defended town was the *Pur* or Royal Fort, the Granary the *Koshṭhāgāra*, the Assembly Hall the *Sabhā* or *Saṁthāgāra* serving as the Hall of Public Audience (*Āsthāna-maṇḍapa* of later literature), and last of all the so called "College" the Royal Palace (*Prāsāda*), and the Great Bath corresponding to the *Maṅgala-Pushkariṇī* in which the members of the consecrated aristocracy called *Rajānaḥ* took their sacramental bath as amongst the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī. To this may be added four other components, namely, the Broad Road (*Mahāpatha*), Rampart (*Prākāra*), Rammed Foundation (*Vapra*) and Gateway (*Gopura Dvāra*) with bastions (*Aṭṭālaka*). The argument from this contingent of ten buildings and architectural parts throws up links between the proto-historic and historic cultures of India. A capital city in later times was also of the same lay-out. What remains to complete the picture was a religious shrine which perhaps lies concealed under the Buddhist Stūpa.

DOCKYARD AT LOTHAL— At Lothal (Saragwala Tila, Distt. Ahmedabad) a respectable tomn two miles round, divided by a broad street, into six blocks, was discoverd in 1958-59, a large dockyard roughly trapezoid on plan, its eastern and western embankments being 710′ long, the northern 124′ and southern 116′. The greatest extent height of the embankment was 14′. Boats could enter the harbour at high tide through an opening in the eastern embankment, the dwarf-wall near the entrance being meant to retain water even at low tide. A spill-channel existed in the southern embankment for the outlet of excess water, care being taken to provide even a sliding door fixed in two groves at the mouth of the channel. [Fig. 11]. This gives proof of the sea-borne trade carried on by the Harappans settled at Lothal. Unfortunately the dockyard and the town were submerged by a major flood.

Sculpture

They had developed a lithic industry of making stone statuary, of which only a limited number of eleven pieces were found besides the two fine torsos from Harappa. The highlight is the bearded head and bust of a male figure wearing a scarf with a tre-foil decoration originally filled with red paste. [Fig. 12]. One of the eyes had shell-inlay when it was found. A hole on each side of neck was meant probably to hold a necklace. The tre-foil pattern had an international background being found in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Crete where it is associated with a religions character which makes it probable that the Mohenjo-daro bust was intended to portray a deity or perhaps a priest. In the Indus Valley itself the tre-foil pattern occurs on beads of steatite or of steatite paste. The head is covered with closely cropped wavy hair held by a fillet (*patra*). It has narrow half-closed eyes, low receding forehead and a face disproportionate to the head making it distinct from the contemporary sculpture of Mesopotamia. But there are certain common features also, e. g. the shaven upper lip, use of inlay for the eyes and a sturdy neck. The half closed eyes indicate a *Yogī* in contemplative pose with the gaze fixed on the tip of the nose. This may not be surprising since the *Yoga* cult is seen in the pose of a figure seated with cross-legs. But it may be noted that the same kind of eyes have been noticed in some very early clay figurines from Kish and Ur.

The other stone heads from Mohenjo-daro also show some noteworthy features as follows:—

1. A weathered limestone head; 5½″ high; showing shell-shaped ears and white stone inlay in one of the eyes.

2. Limestone head ; nearly 7″ high ; short cropped hair gathered in a bun at the back held by a fillet ; a shaven upper lip ; shell-shaped ears ; inlaid eyes ; modelling of the cheeks and lips shows feminine sensitiveness but the short beard makes it certainly a male figure.

3. Seated alabaster male figure with the head broken ; 11″ high ; arrangement of the lower clothing shows it to be a *tahmad* or "a thin kilt-like garment secured round the waist, covered by a thin shawl over the left shoulder and under the right arm". On the back is a long lock of braided hair similar to the feminine *Veṇī* ; of poor modelling ; the squatting posture is somewhat similar to that of Wema Takshama statue.

4. Limestone head ; 7¾″ high ; hair gathered in a bun (*Chūḍā*) at the back having three strands ; ears are shell-like ; eyes inlaid at one time ; chin without beard ; face large out of proportion.

5. Alabaster statue of a squatting man ; 16½″ high ; right knee raised ; hands resting on the knees ; bearded face but details worn out ; once had inlay in the eyes ; a fillet round the head tied at the back with ends hanging down.

6. Fragmentary limestone figurine ; formerly polished ; with a crude hand on a knee.

7. Fragmentary squatting or seated figure in limestone ; 8½″ high ; hand on knee ; a series of holes drilled above the ankles for anklets.

8. Unfinished limestone figure of a man in squatting posture ; 8½″ high ; hands on knees. Its special feature is the kilt-like garment spread between the legs ; indications of fillet round the head.

9. Another limestone figure of a composite animal (10″ high) had the body of a ram with horns and an elephant's trunk which probably had some religious character. Similar animals of composite types are depicted on the seals.

The modelling of these figures is stereotyped and decadant and they are said to have come from later levels.

HARAPPA TORSOS— Two statuettes from Harappa, which many scholars have accepted as genuine finds, give an idea of the naturalistic human sculpture of which the Harappan artists were capable. The sensitive modelling of the body foreshadows the spirit of historical Indian sculpture as in the Yakshī figure from Didarganj, Patna. Both are torsos (just under 4″), one of red sandstone and the other in grey limestone. The first has a frontal treatment, realistic with sensitive muscular form both on the chest and the back. The treatment of the heavy line of the abdomen is very much similar to that of statues of Kushāṇa time. It had inlaid nipples and discs on shoulders and a separate attached head. (Fig. 13).

The sculpture in grey limestone is a lively dancing figure with head originally affixed separately, the arms and legs designed in more than one piece were similarly attached and the nipples were inlaid. (Fig. 14). The contour of the body and the heavy hips show it to be a female figure, the several features pointing to an ideal feminine beauty (cf. *madhye saṅgrāhyā, pashchād-varīyāsī, pṛithuśroṇi*, Šatapatha Br. 1.2.5.16.). The drilled holes on the back were intended for affixed hair. The narrower region between the shoulders *(viṃishṭāntarāṁsā*, ŚB. I. 2.5.16, 3.5.1.11)[1], and the soft effeminate built as well as the delicate pose of balancing the body on the right leg while the left is thrown to the right in a rhythmic sweep hardly leave any doubt that it was a female dancer either human or divine.

The identification of the two figures should draw our attention. The male adipose stoutly built youth seems to be rather extraordinary. It represents the type of Nude God referred to in the Atharva Veda as Mahā-Nagna, the eternal Nude Man. Rudra-Śiva as *Digambara* (sky-clothed) typifies the same conception. Happily the female consort of Mahā-Nagna, Nude Lord, is described in the same verse as Mahā-Nagnī, the Female Nude or the Eternal Woman both striding one after the other as a pair (AV. *Mahā-Nagnī Mahānagnaṁ dhāvantam anudhāvati*, 20.136.11). The rendering of the two primeval Nudes in such an emphatic form is consistent with what we know of other Harappa sculpture. For example, the conception of the Male Deity Rudra-Paśupati was certainly known in that culture, and even more so that of the Great Mother Goddess is seen in many clay figurines. It seems as if the artist, an unusual genius, tradscended in one sweep the diversified formality of repretenting male and female figures and visualised of the primal Man and Woman without intervening ornaments and drapery. Of the two figures one is static showing high concentration of physical power as in the later Yakshas; whereas the female dancer shows a spirit of movement and vivacity which typifies the characteristic movement and dynaminism associated with the female half of the Creator's energy and such figures of later times. That the figures are of divine import seems to be writ large in the lines of their body.

Bronze Sculpture

The figure of a dancing girl in bronze found at Mohenjo-daro (height 4½") is an exquisite figure with the same sensitive feeling as seen in the two Harappa figures. Its feet and ankles are missing. (Fig. 15). The right hand rests on the hip in the *Latāhasta or Katyavalambita* pose. The arms are loaded with bangles which seem to be the same as *Khādayaḥ* of the RV. The head is slightly tilted, and covered with curly hair

[1] एवमिव हि योषां प्रशंसन्ति पृथुश्रोणिः विमृष्टान्तरांसा मध्ये संग्राह्या । श० १।२।५।१६
पश्चाद्वरीयसी पृथुश्रोणिरिति वै योषां प्रशंसन्ति । श० ३।५।१।१७

gathered at the back in a coiled knot. The eyes are large and half-closed. The pose of the long legs and the elongated arms and slender bust all suggest an exceptional mastery in capturing the livelinss and rhythm of a female dancer long practised in her art. The reference to *Nritu* in the RV. seems to indicate a figure of this type.

This and other figure in bronze are proof of the technique of casting metal by the *cire perdue* or lost-wax (*Madūchchhishṭa*) process, a technique having a continuity of abovt 5000 years on the Indian soil by which some of the greatest plastic art of India like the *Naṭarāja* bronzes and the Sultanganj copper Buddha were produced. Copper was the chief metal used in the Indus Valley for which the Vedic name was *Ayas* (अयस्). Iron was not known to them. They mixed ten percent tin with copper and wrought the alloy of bronze.

A late bronze foot with an anklet found separately is more artistic corresponding to the missing portion in the bronze dancer. Amongst the number of bronze animals the figure of a buffalo and a ram are much more realistic giving evidence of mastery of naturalistic modelling.

It should be observed that the human statuary from the Indus Valley has a distinctive type of its own. In the Sumerian statuary, both early and late, the eyes are round and full but in Harappa they are long and narrow with half-closed lids. Inlaid eyes are found also in Babylonia and Egypt but in lesser numbers, The sturdy neck of Mohenjo-daro statues is much more emphasised than in Babylon. The low receding forehead and the high narrow nose are features common to both India and the West. In the treatment of the ears which resemble an oyster shell or saucer the Indian artist followed his convention. Although the number of statuattes and figurines is limited it is enough to show that an individual style had been evolved.

Terracotta Figurines

They are made of solid clay, of red colour well kneaded, bearing a red wash or slip, sometimes showing a polish. The figurines are of two classes, human and animal, the former also divided into male and female types. The number of female figurines is much in excess to that of the male.

The male figures are marked by a long nose, beardless chin, receding forehead, long slit eyes, appliqué mouths gashed, crudely modelled bust, pointing to an indifferent interest of the modeller in the making of such figures which may have been either secular or religious types. There is a horned figure and some horned masks, cast in a mould with oblique eyes which may have been used for apotropaic purposes to ward off evil (*Ārakshārtha*). The use of mould howsoever limited is

noteworthy. A Janus-like (*ubhayataḥ śirshṇa*) figure was pressed from a double mould. The idea is known in the Ṛigveda mentioning a two-headed Supreme Deity (*Dviśīrshā mahodeva*, RV. IV. 58.3). Although the material is limited the ethnic character is emphasised as in the case of a man, found by Wheeler in 1950 on the Granary Site of Mohenjo-daro, its skull cap and sturdy built with the usual features of the long nose and receding forehead treated in one line seem to establish a definite type in the population probably of the peasantry.

Female Figures--The female figurines in clay are much more impressive. They are heavily adorned with ornaments. In the case of the figure Dk 2384 found at Mohenjo-daro, on the head is a high fan-like projection which may be identified with *Opaśa* mentioned in the Ṛigveda as the mark of a beautiful woman, secured at its base by a flat band or fillet with pendant loop near the right ear. The braided locks (*Kaparda* of the Ṛigveda) and the ear-pendants are also indicated. In some other cases the ears have a conical cup or pannier on each side which may be the *Kurīra* of the Ṛigveda. Actual specimens of a cone and of fillets in gold have been found. Besides armlets (*Khādi*) the most elaborate ornaments are worn round the throat in the form of a tight choker and five other necklaces with schematic arrangement one within the other descending from the shoulders and touching the girdle below (a similar torso found by Mackay, pl. LXXV, 17). Four of the necklaces have elongated bead-pendants and the fifth, the longest, is stamped with rosettes marking it out as a lotus garland either real or imitated in gold. The wide triple girdle (*mekhalā*) with a buckle device to secure it on the front emphasises the feminine character of the figure. The portion below the thighs is missing. The pubic triangle is over-emphasised but actual nudity is not indicated. The eyes are indicated by round pellets, the nose is long and straight in a line with the forehead and the mouth is an appliqué strip of clay with a horizontal slit. The breasts are prominent swelling on the two sides of the necklaces. There is no doubt that much thought has gone into the ornamentation of the figure and the whole atmosphere round it is that of a deity. [Fig. 16]. Another example is a complete standing figure wearing the same ornaments but with pannier-like projections (*Kurīra*) on the two sides of the head, but having undigitated hands and feet. [Fig. 17]. If we compare these with the earliest mother goddess figurines from Mathura and Taxila [Fig. 18 a-b] firm links as to the same ideal type are present in these proto-historic and early historic female figurines. She seems to represent the Great Mother Goddess, *Mahī Mātā* (RV. V. 47. 1). Her worship not only in India but also in the ancient-most Iran prevailed. As a Goddess for the Asuras the Vedic and early literature speaks of her as *Māyā*, and for the gods as the divine mother *Aditi* (*Deva-Mātā*). Later in classical times she gave place to *Śrī* with a revised inter-

Fig. 12

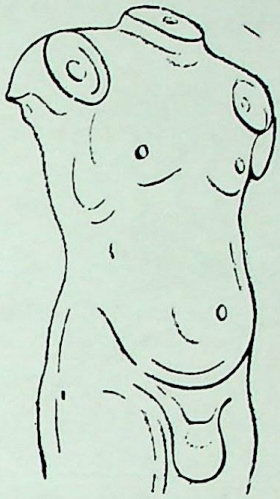


Fig. 13

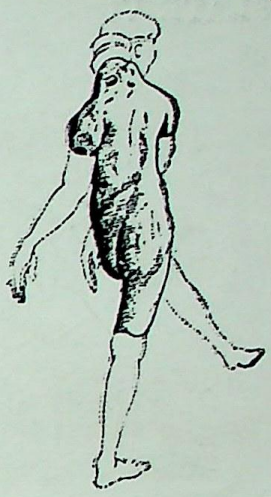


Fig. 14

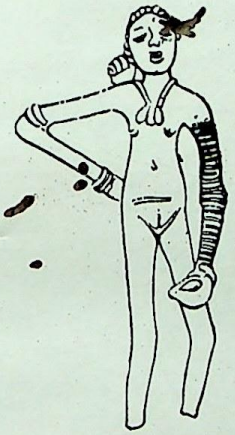


Fig. 15

Fig. 16

Fig. 17

Fig. 18a

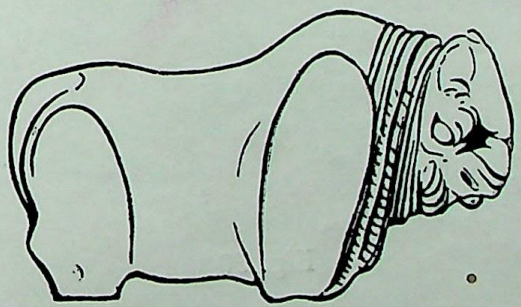


Fig. 19

Fig. 18b

PLATE VI

Fig. 20

pretation, being treated both as an independent goddess and the consort of Vishṇu. In the Indus Valley figurines we occasionally find an infant at her breast or on the hip pointing to her motherhood aspect. The notion of fertility finds support in one specimen showing pregnancy. On a seal from Harappa a woman is represented with a plant coming out of her womb, a flamboyant symbol of fertility. The female figurines are generally undraped but in a couple of cases they wear a kilt-like skirt made of wool closely resembling the *kaunakes* worn by the early Sumerians and the proto-Elamites of Susa. There are some secular figurines also showing women kneading dough or holding a dish of cakes.

The cult of the goddess occupied an important place in the life of the people. The uniformity of style, similarity of ornamentation and the wide area over which they were spread forces the conclusion that these were religious figures related to cult worship of the goddess. The area of distribution of such female figures is not limited to the Indus Valley and Baluchistan but extends to Persia, Elam, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Crete, Cypress, Egypt, and the Agean world. In these civilisations we find an overwhelming consciousness in favour of the Feminine whether the Goddess is named Isis, Innini (Lady of Heaven), Ishtar, Anahita or Aditi ('मातरमदिति महीम्', VS. 18. 30). She was the Great Female, identified in some cultures with the Earth Mother, as surely in India. It may be mentioned here that the one important tradition which the Indus Valley people transmitted to their successors is the wide spread cult of the Mother Goddess in the form of *Śaktī, Devī, Mātā, Bhūmi* (Hindi, *Bhuiyān*, भुइयाँ), the Village Deity (*Grāma-Devatā*) *par excellence*, all exemplifying the *Magna Mater*. The figurines from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro are generally of a benevolent goddess, but the reverse of it is seen in the grim figurines from Kulli having a terrifying skull-like aspect. They could not have been toys for children but a mother Goddess like Kālī or Chaṇḍikā of later times.

Nearly three-fourths of the clay-figurines represent animals specially humped bulls (*Kakudmant vrishabha*). Cows are never represented. The other animals are elephant, rhinoceros, pig, monkey, goat, sheep, turtle and birds etc. One specimen from a late level at Mohenjo-daro seems to be that of a horse but so indifferently made as to be doubtful. Some bull figurines are of high æsthetic quality comparable to those on the seals showing the great strength of the animal in the developed muscles, hump, strong neck, dewlap, frowning eyes and head. [Fig. 19].

Pottery

The pottery material from the Indus Valley was produced on the wheel. It is both plain and decorative with designs painted in black colour on a red

surface. Half a dozen kilns in a potter's quarter where the ware was manufactured have been found. They are circular pits of 6'-7' diameter with a perforated floor and arrangement for smoke to escape. Red ochre or earth from Hurmuz seems to have been used for the red slip on the pots.

The following designs are painted : intersecting circles, which are peculiar to the Indus Valley ; sigmas and wavy lines ; komb ; sun-symbol, in one case with a thousand rays (Mackay, *Further Excavations* Pl. LXX, 39) ; punched circlets ; stars ; arrow-heads ; four-petalled flowers (*Chauphuliā* चौफुलिया) ; check-board formed of squares in black against a red backgronnd ; net ; fret (*kuñjarāksha*) ; hatching, a common motif to distinguish one square or triangle from another ; double inverted pots (*Uttāna-chamū*, RV. I. 164. 33) ; fish-scales (Skt. *Matsyaśalka*, Hindi, *Sahresā*, सहरेसा) ; a ribbon round the jars. Besides these geomatrical patterns figures of animals and birds, snakes or fishes occur. In some cases a row of animals is shown, a motif well-known in Elam and Sumer. Animal figures are generally associated with natural objects such as leaves (specially of *pīpal*) and trees or birds (peacock) perching on them. Human figures are a few, e. g. a fisherman carrying two nets suspended from a shoulder pole on two sides (Skt. *Vihaṅgikā*) (Vats, *Harappa*, LXIX, 16). On a pot-sherd from cemetry H is a hunting scene showing two antelopes with the hunter between them shooting the animal on the right with bow and arrow and the animal on left being torn by a pursuing dog. Polychrome pottery is a special ware at Amri in pre-Harappan levels and also at Nal in north Baluchistan. [Fig. 20].

The types of pottery include goblets with a conical bottom, dishes, basins, flasks, norrow necked vases, cylindrical bottles, tumblers, corn-measures, spouted vases and a very special type of dish on stand, called offering stand or incense-burner, which is distinctively an Indus Valley ware, a sure sign of chalcolthic culture wherever it may be found.

SPECIAL TYPES—Some special types in pottery are to be noted :—

a. Knobbed pottery or pimpled ware ornamented on the outside with knobs, set closely in rows, only a few specimens being exposed. Similar pottery is known from Tell Asmar in Babylonia in levels corresponding to the Indus Valley. There also the number is limited. Probably they were associated with the mother cult illustrating her aspect of a thousand teats (*Sahasradhārā, Sahasra-ūdhas*).

b. Perforated pottery is a peculiar type of cylindrical shape ranging from 2 to 20 inches. Either it served as a heater with live-coals, or as a religious vessel for sprinkling water through multiple perforations as one used

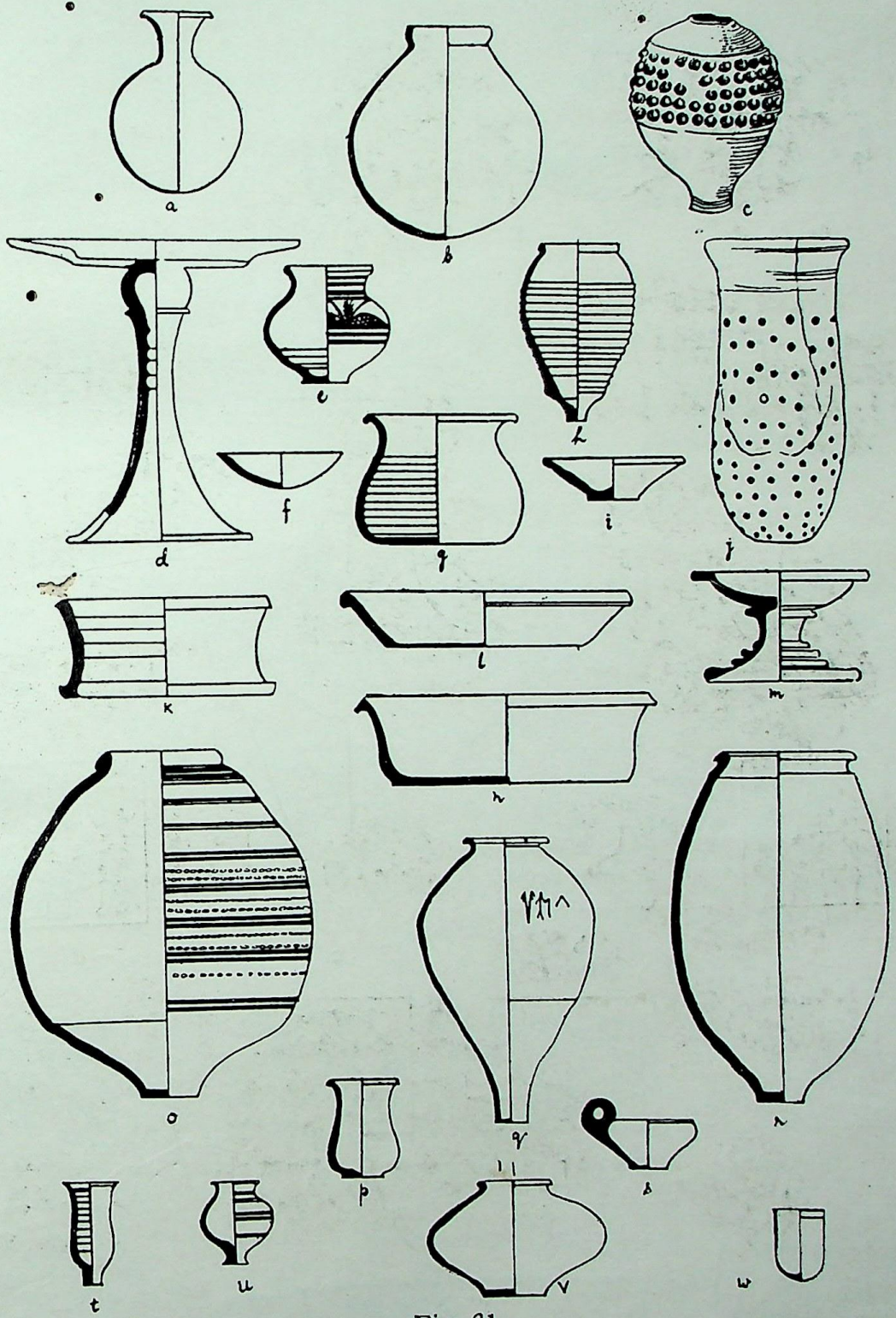


Fig. 21

PLATE VIII

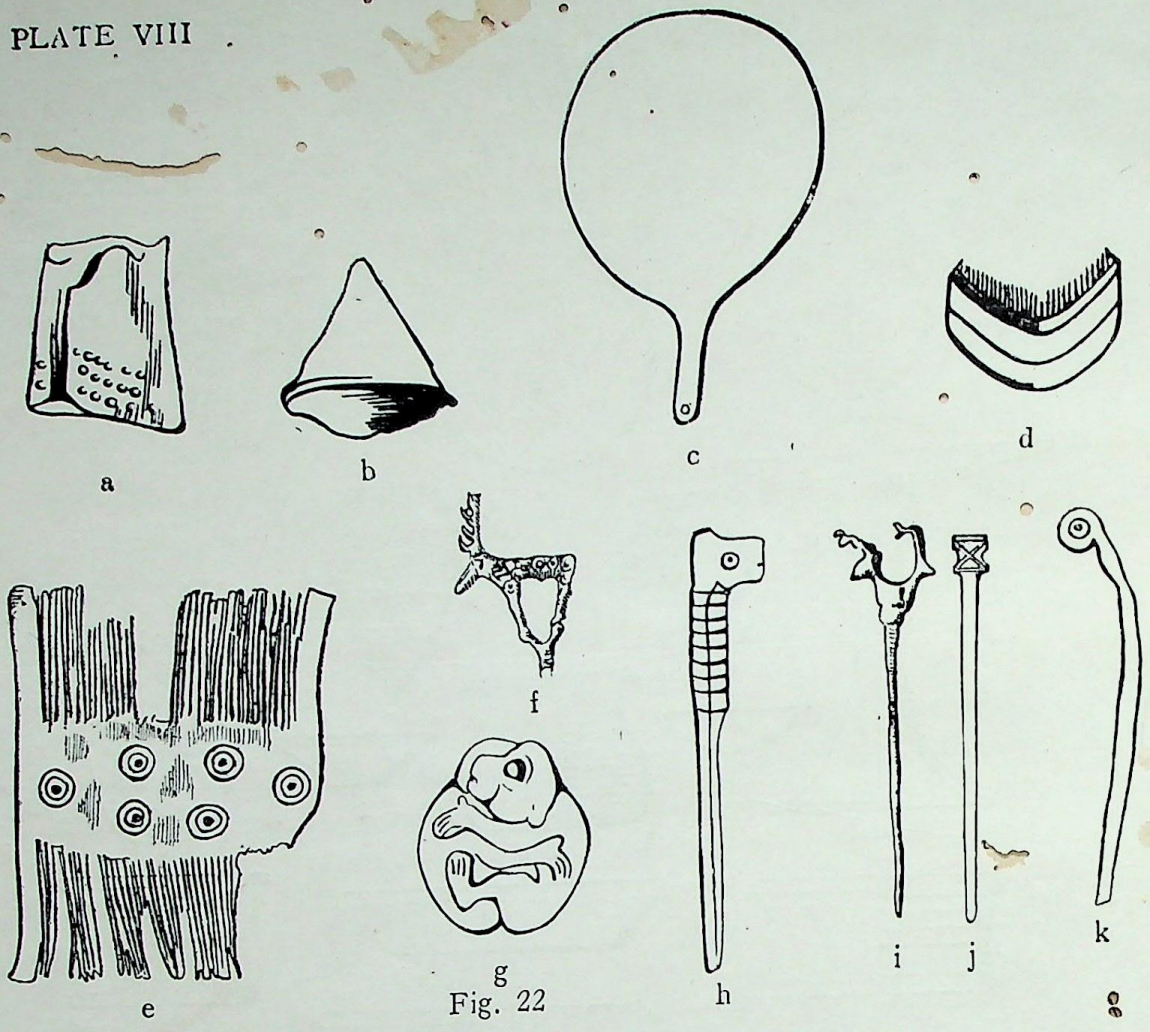


Fig. 22

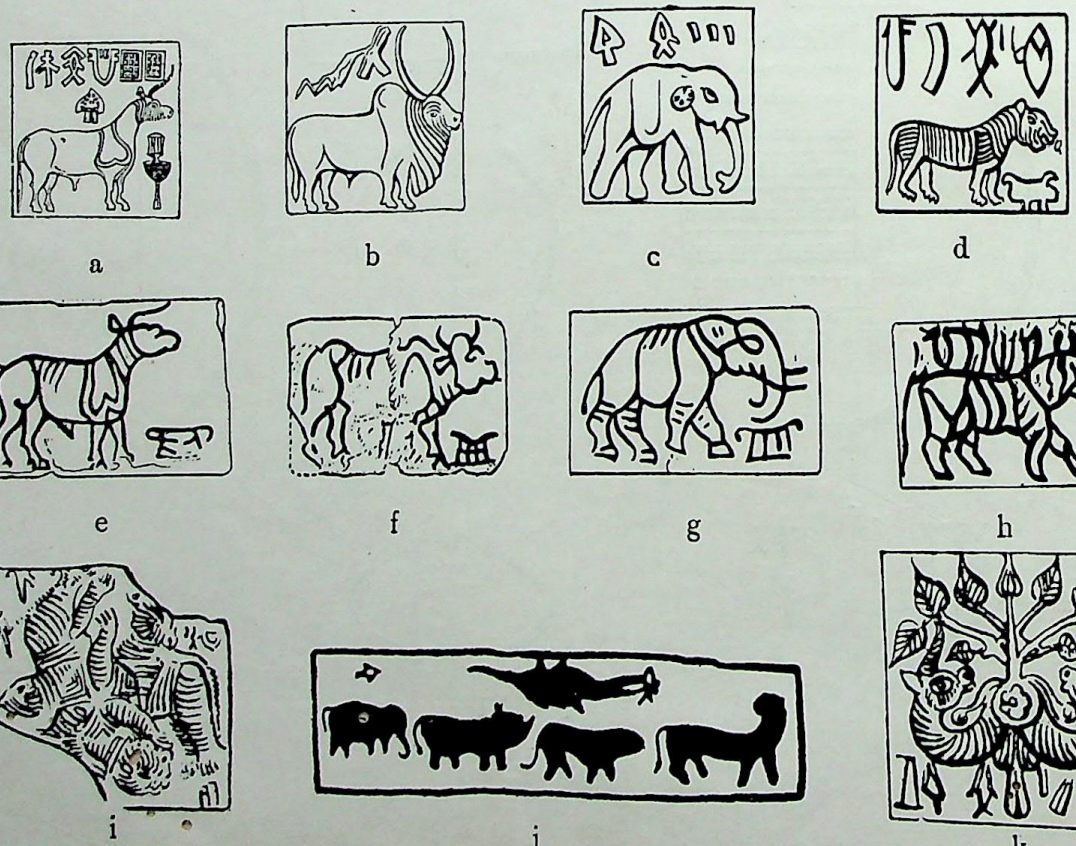


Fig. 23

even today in the expiatory ceremony for a child born under an ill-omened star (Hindi, Sattāisā, सत्ताइसा).

c. Minature pottery comprises a large number of tiny vessels, sometimes less than half an inch but well finished and polished with exquisite shapes. Specimens of fired clay are quite numerous, but majority are of faience. It was at one time suggested that they were meant for scented oil and cosmetics, but the tradition of minature pottery continued also in the historic period, e. g. Rajghat alone turning out about 500 specimens now in the Bharat Kala Bhavan. It was children's pottery, a kind of kindergarten to train the child's mind and eye in the different shapes used in domestic utensils. The custom for a potter to supply such tiny ware along with the bigger ones has come down to our own days in north India.

d. Incised pottery. With scratched figures on the base of certain deep pans and dishes of offering stands. The marks are like pictographic signs.

e. Animal-shaped pottery. A couchant ram hollow on the back is an instance of this type.

The big storage jars have conical bottoms which were partially buried in the earth or placed on stands or a circular base. Some were actually found with interred bottoms. The Indus Valley pottery was essentially of a utilitarian character fulfilling the needs of drinking, eating, cooking, worshipping and storage etc., but the æsthetic appeal in the painted designs and perfect shapes specially in the minature pottery and burial pottery is no less eloquent. [Fig. 21].

A special type of painted polychrome pottery shows the designs in several colours as red and green on a buff slip. A sherd from Chanhu-daro is painted with birds and animals in black, white and red on a yellow ground. These were no doubt connected with pre-Harappan Nal pottery which employs the full range of five basic colours (*Pañcha varṇa*) as red, blue, green, yellow and white.

Burial pottery forms a class by itself. At Harappa in cemetry H. two distinct strata were exposed with a rich collection of grave pottery, the upper one of one hundred and twenty pot-burials and the lower one of earth-burials accompained by funeral pottery consisting of water-pots, bowls, offering dishes, saucers, flat covers, flasks, round vases etc. The shapes of the burial pots (ranging in hieght from $9\frac{3}{4}''$ to $23\frac{3}{4}''$) are round, ellipsoid marked by parallel finger grooves on the lower portion. The smaller jars were at once finished on the wheel, but the larger ones were made in two parts, the upper and the lower being joined afterwards. Pots of carinated type are all painted at the neck and are of smaller size. The burial pots from

cemetry H. are different in shape and in their realistic painted motifs from the jars coming from the mounds with geometric and other patterns. Peacock is common on the burial jars. On one example is a goat of large size with enormous horns that are ornamented with eight trident-like devices, both being associated with Śiva. Other designs on the burial pots include stars, rayed orbs, wavy lines, continuous triangles, fish, leaves, plants, flying birds. The flat covers from the earth burials show very effective and regular designs. They in all cases were painted on the under side with ornaments of deer, peacocks, trees, leaves, stars, birds, fish, hands, tassels, etc., enclosed in concentric circles and having the same scenic effect as the assemblage of motifs on cross-bar medallions of later times (Vats, *Harappa* pl. LXIV ; Smith, *Jaina Stūpa at Mathūra*, Plates 71-73).

The painted pottery designs from the Indus Valley transmit to us a rich album of motifs pregnant with meaning, of which the full significance yet remains to be decoded. From what we know it is clear that the motifs were meant both for beauty and for serving a religious purpose which implies a symbolical character as in the case of the Vedic art symbols treated in the following chapter.

Amongst miscellaneous objects are a small model cart with solid wheels, a whistle made in the form of a bird, rattles with clay pellets inside, cubical dice, spoons, spindle whorls, bird cages, and model cakes.

FAIENCE—A fine kind of paste called faience was manufactured for making toy-figurines, ornaments as bracelets, studs, amulets, buttons, rings, minature pottery, balls, marbles, gamesmen, inlay pieces, spindle whorls, seals, plaques and weights.

Faience was prepared from powdered quartz, or sometimes also with a binding material from steatite mixed with a powdered glaze which was then fired to form a vitreous substance that was finally glazed. In the process of manufacture a suitable colour was given to it by adding various mineral substances. The process of manufacture was complex. Three objects of faience are of high artistic merit, viz. a nibbling squirrel, a couchant ram and a figure of coalescing monkeys. Faience objects have been found in Mesopotamia, Syria, Western Asia and Egypt. Perhaps the Harappan people borrowed it from their neighbours in Mesopotamia where its use is popular at all levels of the excavated sites.

Although faience was widely used in antiquity, the glazing of pottery was introduced in other countries at a later stage, and its earliest example has been found at Mohenjo-daro. In Egypt glazed pottery was unknown before Roman times. In Greece it was not known at all. In Mesopotamia it is ascribed to about 1000 B. C. This gives credit to the Indus Valley people for inventing the techniqne of glazing

pottery. No true glass has been found in the Indus Valley although the use of glass is not far removed from the process of glazing pottery. To Egypt goes the credit of making true glass for the first time.

JEWELLERY—One hoard at Harappa and four at Mohenjo-daro had been found. Recently in Wheeler's excavation one more hoard came from Harappa. The Mohenjo-daro hoards were packed in silver jars and wrapped in cloth, but the one from Harappa was found in a hole dug down 7 or 8 feet beneath one of the cottages in coolie-lines. It consisted of nearly 500 pieces of gold from armlets to complete necklaces of multiple strings of beads and gold.

Gold and silver were abundant metals in the Indus Valley. The source of gold was the distant gold mine of Kolar in South India, or they were also obtaining granular gold (*Paipīlika Suvarṇa*) from Siberian mines and Central Asian washings through traders coming by the Kamboja-Dvārāvatī route which passed through Mohenjo-daro.

Silver was obtained from distant sources in Afganistan and possibly from still remoter mines in north Burma. Some quantity may have been locally extracted from alloys containing lead.

The actual jewellery worn by the people included gold plaques both round and rectangular (*Padaka*) having ornamental paste inlay in white colour, plain gold armlets, conical ornaments for the ears, and a great variety of multi-stringged necklaces and girdles. A distinguishing feature of the Indus Valley jewellery was the use of beads of gold, silver and other semi-precious stones, manufactured in a number of shapes and strung together as necklaces or girdles. The material of beads consisted of carnelian (Hindi तामड़ा), chalcedony (*Karketana*), agate (*Lekhāśma* or *Galvarka*; Hindi हकीक), lapis lazuli (*Rījāvarta*), steatite, faience, shell, pottery, and jadeite (*Masāra*). Lapis lazuli was scarce in the Indus Valley but abundant in Sumer. The etched carnelian bead was better known in Mesopotamia and Persia and also recovered by Woolley in the Royal Tombs at Ur of the Chaldees, in the 3rd and 2nd millenium B. C. pointing to trade relations between the West and Harappa.

At Chanhu-daro a bead-maker's shop was exposed throwing light on the different stages of bead industry. The rough stone (*Khaḍ-patthar* खड़पत्थर) was first split and sawn into a bar as at present (*Chīrnā* चीरना). A wire bow with an abrassive like powdered quartz is used for this purpose at present and it does not appear that the technique has changed from what it was in the Indus Valley. The small rod of semi-precious stone (Skt. *Maṇi*, Persian *Sang*) about 3 inches in length and square in section was then flaked to a rough cylinder and finally ground and

polished. The second part of the technique is called कोरना (*koranā*) i. e. making round and is still employed by the traditional lapidarists. The three-fold process of cutting, rounding and polishing being over, two more processes remained, viz. perforating a central longitudinal hole and finally cutting the rods to the required size of the bead. The process of drilling or boring (Hindi, *bedhanā*) was laborious but performed with simple tools and an adroitness gained after long experience. Today Cambay is the biggest centre of bead manufacture, specially agate, and it may not be surprising if the Harappan craftsmen of Rangpur and Lothal started the industry and have left behind their legacy.

SHAPES OF BEADS—Cylindrical beads of varying lengths from long thin specimens to very short ones are common, some of them tipped at both ends with gold. Beads of cog-wheel type of thin discoid shape made of glazed paste have been found. Short barely-shaped (*yava-mādhyaka*) and long barrel-shaped beads (*harītakī-mādhyaka*) were popular. Other shapes included the rectangular and segmented beads (Hindi *garerīnumā*).

CLASSES OF ORNAMENTS—(a) Head-bands made of thin flat strips of gold worn round the forehead both for beauty and for keeping the hair in position. They are now known as *Pāt* (Skt. *Patra*) and worn by Jat women in Rohtak area even today. These ribbon-like strips or fillets vary in length up to 16″ and a little less than half an inch in width. Generally two holes are bored at the two ends, but there are specimens showing a number of holes bored along one edge to attach pendant strings of small pearls on the forehead.

(b) Metal cones - Small cones of gold (Hindi, *Sone kī kulfiyān*, सोने की कुलफियाँ) have been found in both the cities with a loop soldered inside the tip end. They were worn behind the ears and seem to be the same as Vedic *kurīra*.

GIRDLES—A favourite ornament with women was the gold girdle. One specimen found in Hoard No. 2 of Mohenjo daro is 3′ 4″ in length. It consists of 6 strings having long barrel-shaped cylindrical beads of translucent red carnelian, each being 4.85″ long by ·4 in diameter in the middle and ·3″ at the two ends. They are separated from one another by spiral beads and a vertical bronze spacer pierced with holes for the strings. At each end of the girdle there is a semi-circular hollow flatened terminal of bronze originally gilded. This perfect specimen is evidence of the high mastery in this art attained by the Indus Valley goldsmiths. Of long carnelian beads even the inside was polished, the process of boring and polishing being managed from both ends and the holes meeting accurately in the middle. Very probably a copper drill with fine emery powder was used.

Another necklace of special beauty consists of a single row of barrel-shaped beads of translucent green jadeite, a stone found in Central Asia. It is beautified by

disc-shaped beads of gold separating the green jadeite ones and further by setting pendants of agate and jasper in the centre. Two necklaces of minute gold cylindrical beads and of globular beads (मटरमाला) are attractive. A fine choker (*Kaṇṭhā*) worn on the neck comes from Mahenjo-daro consisting of six strings of globular boads separated at intervals by flat gold spacers and finished with hemi-spherical hollow terminals at each end..

MISCELLANEOUS ORNAMENTS – We also find finger rings of gold, silver, shell, copper and bronze; ear-rings which are limited in number due to the fact that they were not removed from the ears of women at the time of death, as is the practice upto the present day; but there is no example of nose-studs which are absent throughout the long history of Indian ornaments until the Muslim period. Bracelets were made of gold, silver, copper, bronze and faience which are pieces of real art. Pottery bangles were worn by the poorer people. They are generally crude, but an exceptionally well finished specimen made of very fine clay and coated with smooth pink slip was found.

HAIR-PINS—Both men and women were fond of keeping long hair often gathered in a knot or bun at the back of the head. Fillets, combs and hair-pins helped in the make-up of coiffure styles. The hair-pins, together with handled mirrors and kohl pots and sticks point to a cult of beauty for adornment of the physical body referred to as a special feature (*Upanishad*) of Asura culture. Several hair-pins are worthy of note, e.g. a fine specimen of bronze surmounted by two heads of black bucks placed back to back each with spiral horns ; (ii) another topped by spirals on either side similar to those found in Egypt ; (iii) an ivory pin with an ibex ; (iv) a pin topped by three monkeys seated in a ring with arms round each other's shoulder ; (v) a pin with its top like the seed-vessel of a lotus. [Fig. 22].

Ivory—A few ivory objects indicate the beginnings of this art by the Harappans. Elephant depicted on the seals roamed in the large forests in a wet climate. An interesting ivory plaque (1.05″ × .4″ thick) shows a male figure facing left with hands on hip and wearing a close-fitting cap and a short loin-cloth. He carries a quiver of arrows on the back. Such figures are seen on archaic seals from Susa in ancient Iran. Other ivory objects include collyrium sticks, combs, mirror handles and cylinders.

Shell (*Śaṅkha*)—Its supply was obtained from nearer home in Persian Gulf rather than the Gulf of Manar. *Śaṅkha* articles both for inlay and ornaments were as popular as they are even body. The shapes and designs of inlay show (i) Petals, a common shape used for flower designs laid against a circular centre to form the corona

(ii) Stepped design, it does not appear on painted pottery at Mohenjo-daro although popular at Nal in north Baluchistan and on the painted ware of the First Period at Susa. It is an open question whether this motif was intended to represent a *ziggurat* i.e. multi-terraced temple, or the battlement motif on citadel walls conspicuous in Achaemenian art and found also at Bharhut, Sanchi and Mathura. It may be the same as the *Pañcha-paṭṭika* motif of early Buddhist literature. (iii) Cross—It is in two forms, one with arms of equal length found in many countries, and the other with one of the arms double the other. Specimens of the latter have been found besides the Indus Valley in Elam and early Babylonia. (iv) Rosettes, a fairly common design scattered in Iran, Mesopotamia and Egypt and continued throughout the historic art of India. (v) A two-foil arch design, in simple or complex form, is peculiar to the Indus Valley and not known outside. It is marked on the sides of antelopes and also of the rhinoceros (vi) Fret design -- these are circles with their interior frecked in various ways. This motif is unknown at Susa and in Mesopotamia. (vii) Eye-design, a motif found in shell inlay and on painted pottery. Some inlay pieces of lozenge shape (*shakarpārā* or *larfidār*) are also known. (viii) *Pīpal* leaf—only one inlay piece was found, although the design is popular on painted pottery. (ix) Animal figurines in shell or any other inlay are extremely rare at Mohenjo-daro, although common in Babylonia.

SEALS

About 1200 steatite seals found at Mohenjo-daro alone occupy an important place in Indus Valley art. The normal size is from $\frac{3}{4}$" to $1\frac{1}{4}$" in length, the shape being square, having a perforated boss at the back for handling and suspension. There are seals without the boss also and some of round shape. Only about six specimens of cylinder seals have been found. In manufacture the rough stone was cut with a saw as in the case of beads and finished with a knife and abrasive, the fine carving being done with a burin or fine chisel and drill with utmost care of which the craftsmen were capable. The seals were a mass-produced commodity, 'little masterpieces of controlled realism, with a monumental strength, in one sense out of all proportion to their size and in another entirely related to it, their average attainment being exceedingly high" (Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, p. 76).

The intaglios or engraved designs on the seals include a wide range of animals with some pictographic signs. Some have only linear designs including the *Svastika*, multiple squares set concentrically, a cross pattern both plain and multiple. It should be noted that the Indus Valley seals have no resemblance either in shape or device or in the pictographic signs with any seals of Sumer or other civilizations of Western Asia. The technique of cutting and

polishing the seal with its white lustre was an invention *sui generis* or unique to the Indus Valley people which no other people of antiquity can share with them. Their independence is established in many other fields, e.g. the script of which not a single sign out of 400 has been traced elsewhere, a good deal of pottery, ornaments and decorative designs; no doubt they had wider contacts and perhaps colonies of Indian merchants settled in Mesopotamia, but that was in the normal course of trade and the creative genius of the people in many fields asserted itself in their own land in accordance with their own inspiration.

PILLAR ON THE UNICORN SEALS—The most frequently represented ox-like beast with a single horn, usually described as unicorn (*Ekaśriṅga*) may be identified with *Sriṅga Vrisha* (RV. VIII. 17.13, AV.20.5.7). In front of the animal is a curious object which seems to be a standard, or banner with a religious significance. In almost all examples the banner consists of three distinct parts, viz. (i) a round tapering shaft, (ii) a bowl-like top which is either pimpled like the seed-vessel of a lotus or with fluted ribs, and a square or round *Vedikā*. The bowl-like object may be a *Kuṇḍa*, from which the deity symbolised as the unicorn (*Sriṅgha-Vrisha*) quaffed his potions of an exhilarating drink. The shaft is extended further from the centre of the bowl and on the summit is a round or square object very much resembling the early railings, consting of two or three cross-bars and upright posts. In the illustrations to volumes by Marshall, Vatsa and Mackay these details are of undoubted certainty. For example, Vatsa plate 86. 20 shows the railing with three cross-bars; 86.25 with two cross-bars; 86.29 with a single row of cross-bars; 86. 16 and 34 only with uprights and no cross-bars. These variations may be detected in many other examples. In Vatsa, plate 88.68 the upper-most projection of the shaft is better shown. In some examples the railing is dome-shaped. In others the pillar shaft does not project above the railing. In still others the railing and the capital of the pillar are contiguous as in Mackay, plate 95.474,486. In some cases the posts of the domed upper portion are curved or tilted. showing clearly that the railing was a bamboo construction as it should have been in that early stage (Mackay, plate 95.578, 585, 588 and many other examples). This is truly the shape of a thatched hut or *Parṇaśālā*. In one case there are about half a dozen rows of cross-bars between two pillars only (Marshall, 105.641). In some clear examples the height of the lofty column is quite well marked (Marshall, 105, 55 3).

The important question arises about its identification The shaft surmounted by a bowl or cauldron (*Chamasa* or *Charu*) and supporting on its top a railed structure, both open to the sky and also having a domed roof, appears to be delibera-

tely designed as an outstanding symbol or banner of a deity. The shaft is the common element between this column and the early historic pillars. The middle portion of this ensign corresponds to the abacus or drum portion of the capital of the later pillars. The uppermosr portion of the historic pillars shows a *Dharma-Chakra* or animal figures like elephant, bull, lion, horse, which were the four sacred animals (*Mahā-Ājāneya Paśu*) with a long unbroken tradition in Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism. In the case of the *Stūpa* the top-most portion is the *Harmikā* comprising a *Chhatra* standing in the centre of the *Vdeikā*. This was considered the Abode of Gods. It appears that in the Indus Valley also the upper-most portion represents the Divine Seat (*Deva-Sadana*). In the Ṛigveda it is stated that on the summit of the Tree of dense foliage God Yama sits in the company of Devas and drinks with them the immortal sap of life (*Yasmin Vṛikshe supalāśe devaiḥ sampibate yamaḥ*, RV. X. 135.1). This idea is made more specific in the case of the sacrificial *Yūpas* in which the top-most portion above the ring (*Chashāla*) is said to be sacred to the Gods. The *Yūpa* and *Stūpa* and the present banner sign on the unicorn seals appear to repeat the same elements of symbolism removed in time from one another. With this analysis in view the Indus Valley banner seems to be the earliest form of a pillar, *Skambha* dedicated to a deity. We are aware that the cult of the pillar as a banner was associated with Prajāpati, Indra and many other gods including the *Trayastrimśa Devas* (cf. Skambha Sūkta, Atharva, 10. 7. 1 44).

It appears that the deity of the Indus Valley Pillar was most probably Rudra. Several reasons may be adduced in its favour. Firstly, Rudra-Śiva as Yogī and Paśupati is already seen on the seals. Secondly, the worship of Rudra according to the *Rudra Sūkta* of Yajurveda prevailed in many parts of the country and in many forms (ये चैनं रुद्रा अभितो दिक्षु श्रिताः सहस्रशः VS. 16.6). Indeed all gods spirits, ghosts and demons were identified with Rudra-Śiva cult, from which he was called Mahādeva and Bhūtapati and even the worship of animal deities came under the cult of Rudra-Śiva as Paśupati. Thirdly, the Mother Goddess (*Ambikā*) worshipped in the Indus Valley was associated with Rudra as his Sister (एष ते रुद्र भागः सह स्वस्राम्बिकया, VS. 3.57). It shows that Rudra and Ambikā were pair deities with cults co-existing. In the fourth place the component parts of the pillar as depicted on the seals point to its affinity with Rudra.

The first part is clearly a shaft, tapering from bottom to the top. In some examples this *Yashṭi* portion is tall and slender (as in Marshall, 103. 18) and in others heavy and stunted. On the top of the shaft is a transverse bar in several examples, (Marshall 102. c) similar to that of the traingle-headed standard on the Punch-marked coins, which feature points to its being rooted in the trident, or trinitarian

Tryambaka symbolism. The abacus supports a half-round bowl-like object marked on some examples on the outside with circlets or pimples, or a bejewelled bowl (*Vasudhāna Uru-kośa*, AV. 11. 2. 11) having filaments rising from its mouth (Marshall, 104. 38, a specimen complete with the tapering shaft, transverse bar, circlets on the bowl each with a pellet in the centre, filaments and the top-most railing).

VEDIKĀ—The object on the summit of this pillar is found on closer analysis to be a *Vedikā*, namely, a structure of upright posts and cross-bars, the number of rows of transverse bars varying as 1, 2, 3 or in one case even 5 (Marshal, 103,18). In some cases only upright posts without bars are shown. Its basic plan is two fold, viz. square, several times shown in isometric projection, open to the sky and at other times circular with a domed roof (Marshall 105. 52, 60, 106.73, and many other examples on plates 106, 107, 108, 109, 110). The circular cottage form (*Parṇaśālā*) is clear in Marshall 103. 16, 104. 30. The *Harmikā* on the Stūpa was the abode of gods and the *Vedikā* on the Indus Valley Rudra-Śiva pillar was the abode of Agni-Rudra as in the Yajñas. From the isometric or angular form it is clear that this *Vedikā* was exactly similar to the railed *Harmikā* of the Buddhist Stūpas. In some cases either a flame or smoke is shown rising from the open mouth of the *Vedikā*. It appears that originally this pillar was the ensign of God Rudra and later on with certain modifications it was adopted for Indra in the form of a Yūpa, the same as Indra-Yashṭi or Indradhvaja with changes due to the influence of the popular cult called *Indramaha*.

Its true nature as the sacred banner of a deity is revealed by a scene depicted on Kulli ware even earlier than Mohenjo-daro : A Brahmani bull with widesprad horns is standing before a pillar and fastened to it by a triple cord. The pillar consists of a shaft in its lower half portion, a bulbous pot above it having a circular ball-like object with twelve spokes in the middle, and on the summit a four-corned rectangular frame. These component parts have a very close parallel with the representations of the pillar on the Unicorn seals. (Stuart Piggot, *Pre-historic India*, fig. 7 facing p. 102). In another example illustrated in the same figure the humpped bull is secured to a *śūla* or spear. This has all the elements of a Śaiva pillar and on this analogy the pillar on the Unicorn seals of slightly later date appears to be but a *Rudra-Śiva Stambha*. The *Dhvaja-stambha* of Buddhism and Jainism were in the same tradition and in fact Buddha himself in Divyāvadāna explains the Yūpa as a *Dharma chinha* reminding the rulers and the people of their duty (Cowell, p. 59).

TYPES OF SEALS—The seals from the Indus Valley are of various types, viz. square with perforated boss above, square without boss, sometimes inscribed on both sides ; rectangular seals with perforated convex back ; rectangular without

boss ; button seals ; cubical seals ; round seals with perforated boss ; rectangular seals with perforated boss on the back ; cylinder seals ; round seals without boss and inscribed on both sides. Cunningham published the first seal from Harappa in 1885, but the script on the seals has not been read so far. In Sumer and elsewhere cylinder seals are known of which only six specimens have been found in the Indus Valley.

The Indus Valley seals were used for stamping the owner's name just like the later clay-seals from historic sites in which personal names with signs are engraved (*Nāma-mudrā*) and this is the class to which seals from the Indus Valley seem to have belonged.

ANIMALS ON THE SEALS—The seals are engraved with figures of animals shown in profile with a line of pictograph above. An ox like animal with a single horn, is depicted on the majority of seals. In front of the beast is an object which was taken to be a bird-cage. As shown above this was the standard banner or pillar sacred to the cult of Rudra-Śiva. This standard does not occur outside the Indus civilisation. Other animals are the big *Brahmani* bull, a magnificent beast with hump and heavy dewlap, short-horned bull, buffalo, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, hare, antelope, eagle, crocodile, etc.

The so-called unicorn may better be described as *Śriṅga-Vṛiśha*, i.e., an ox with horns. This seems to have been the sacred animal of Rudra-Śiva, Nandī of later tradition and up to now the bull is the symbol *par excellence* of Śiva. Another animal depicted on the seals shows the composite form of ox and antelope. Both are associated with Śiva-Rudra, described as a hunter (*Mṛiga-Vyādha*) holding a deer in his hand. There is a curious marking on the shoulder found only on this animal. Similarly the standard or pillar planted in front does not appear with any other animal except the unicorn.

(ii) Short-horned Bull. Next in popularity is the short-horned bull depicted commonly on seals and pottery. Its frowning head is lowered as if the angry animal is about to charge. In every case there is a manger before him on a low flat base. This shape is also exlusive to the Indus Valley. Sir Woolley found a square seal at Ur with the same device but with a cuneiform epigraph.

(iii) Buffalo. This animal is rare, depicted in a natural pose with nose up sniffing in the air.

(iv) *Brāhmaṇī* Bull. The animal has a prominent hump and shoulder and is the famous Indian bull of the Punjab. There is a feeling of great strength in the modelled muscles plastered on the body. It is a magnificent representation and not found any where else outside India. The portraiture of this animal of monumental quality shows the art of seal-making in its perfect form.

(v) Rhinoceros. It is the great Indian rhinoceros at one time roaming in the forests all along the base of the Himalayas as far as Peshawar where Babar hunted it. It was a free animal in the forests of Sind. It is rendered with extreme fidality with folds and wrinkles. Clay figurines of this animal used as toys have also been found.

The tiger with its characteristic stripes, elephant with its long trunk, antelope with long curving horns and the common crocodile of Indian rivers are also depicted. On one seal we find the *Pīpal* tree with its spreading branches and leaves.

MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES - On one seal we see a human figure with hoofs, horns and tail of a bison, struggling with a fabulons beast, the greater part of which is tiger-like. On seals and other objects from Sumer *Enkidu* is always shown struggling with a lion and his companion *Gilgamesh* with a bull. It is possible that at Mohenjo-daro the figure of *Enkidu* is represented in an Indian context where tiger is substituted for lion. On another seal is a composite animal, which appears to be a ram with the horns of a bull, a human face and the trunk and tusks of an elephant. There are long locks of wool on its fore-quaters but the hind quaters and hind legs are those of a tiger. The three-headed beast on another seal appears to be composite of three animals, head and horns of an antelope and body of a unicorn, the head being joined to the body very carefully. On one broken seal the heads and the necks of six animals radiate outward from a ring-like motif, the heads being those of a unicorn, a short-horned bull, an antelope, a tiger and probably a rhinoceros and an elephant (Marshall, seal No. 383).

The design on another seal is most complex, showing three tigers with their bodies crossing one another (Marshall, seal No. 386). [Fig. 23J.

The representation of plant forms on the seals is rare. On a seal (*ibid*, 387) is the *Pīpal* tree or *Aśvattha*, being the Indian Tree of Cosmos. Lion is not represented on any seal in the Indus Valley, but appears repeatedly on the archaic seals from Elam, Sumer. Kish and Babylon. Antelope is rare in the Indus Valley but frequent on the seals of Elam and Sumer.

Seal impressions also have been found, e. g. 5 on jars, 30 on tablets of which 12 are in faience and the rest in clay.

Some seal impressions on triangular prisms are interesting as nothing at all similar to them has been found in Babylonia or Elam. It is also interesting to find that on some seals a file of animals (*Paśu-paṅkti*) is moving showing the unicorn, rhinoceros, crocodile, short-horned bull, elephant and tiger. This motif was very common on the older seals of Mesopotamia and Sūsā, but there the animals marching in row are lions

and antelopes. The list includes three of the Four Great Animals on the Aśokan lion-capital.

COPPER TABLETS—These are flat pieces of copper either rectangular (1.2″ × ·5″to 1·5″ × ·1″), or square (·92″ × ·92″), the latter being rarer. They are incised with inscriptions and figures of animals or men. The majority of tablets are well made. They were first cast and then hammered smooth. In some cases they were trimmed remarkably true with smooth faces, sides and ends. In rare instances the ends are slightly rounded. In other cases they are rough and jagged at one end, which suggests that they were snapped off from a longer strip. All the above features hold good in the fabric of earlier Punch-marked coins also, and it is likely that these copper tablets were to be used as coins. Marshall was not certain about their purpose and suggested that they were amulets. But the numismatic purpose is much more probable, firstly because they were trimmed so carefully after casting and hammering, and secondly because the animals represented are mostly those occurring in groups or singly as symbols on Punch-marked coins.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION—In the foregoing pages we have been discussing similarities between the institutions and arts and crafts of the Indus Valley and of later times. The fact remains that the Indus Valley culture in all its aspects was an original creation on the Indian soil, having wide distribution in place and time, viz. about 1500 miles and c. 1500 years 3000 B.C. 1500 B. C. No doubt remains that it preceded by many centuries the historic cultures of India.

There are two main problems about its Chronology, viz. its syncronism with the ancient cultures flourishing towards the west and its relationship with the Aryan culture of India. Fortunately, the first argument has found a firm solution in archaeology, viz. the discovery of Indus Valley seals in Mesopotamian sites and vice verse and also of some special articles from the west found in the Indus Valley. A total of about 30 Indus seals was found in the protohistoric cities of Mesopotamia and other places. C. J. Godd discussed 16 seals of the Indus style from Ur and two others from Babylonia as well as 8 earlier specimens from Kish, Susa, Lagash, Umma and Tell Asmar and two from unknown sites. To this may be added a second seal from Tell Asmar and another from Tepe Gawra near Mosul and another seal from farther west in Syria. Wheeler made a critical study of the context in which these seals were found and has recorded a list of twelve seals for which some sort of dating can be postulated : one may be pre-Sargonid (an Indian Bull with lowered head, before 2350 B. C.) ; seven of the Sargonid period (2350 B.C.–2000 B.C.) ; and four of the Larsa period (c. 1800 B.C.) and later ((possibly Kassite, about 1500 B.C.). This indicates that during the period 2500 B. C.—1500 B. C. the Indus civilisation

can be dated on the basis of its contacts with Mesopotamia. Other classes of objects also furnish evidence of co-existence viz. etched carnelian beads, bone-inlays of kidney-shape, pottery bearing knobs found at Tell Asmar ; a small casket of greenish grey stone (chlorite schist) with a matted pattern on it found at Mohenjo-daro and at Ur, Kish, Lagash and Susa.

With the determination of this focus of chronology from the West, it is relevant to examine the bearings of the Indus Valley institutions with those of the Vedic age. Although the script has not been read, there are many similarities as pointed out in the previous pages between the life in the Indus Valley and that depicted in Vedic literature. This is a subject too wide to be discussed in the limited space here, but the conclusion is forced that the Aryans did not appear all of a sudden to collide with and uproot the Harappans, but that for some centuries, may be even a millenium, the two peoples co-existed, being inter-locked in cultural and religious exchanges, resulting in a free mutual give and take. The entangled strands of this skein await to be unravelled. But indications are available that the Aryans have preserved in the Vedic literature much of what existed in the Indus Valley both in material and religious fields until the final clash came in the form of two major battles, one at Hariyūpiyā (most probably Harappa) on the Parushṇī (Ravi) and the second westward in the valley of the river Yavyāvatī (modern Zhob) in North Baluchistan (RV. VI. 27. 5-6). The mutual exchanges and borrowings between the two peoples whom we may tentatively identify as the Asuras and the Devas, could not be effaced, but continued in volume amongst the peoples of subsequent generations. This continuity or transmission of both institutions and material life from the Indus Valley to the Vedic Age and historical times appears to be the most outstanding fact in the evolution of human civilisation on the Indian soil. The predominant motif is 'Synthesis' which has been operative through the ages in India's history. The author of the Atharva Veda speaks of the Motherland as being peopled by many races (*Bahudhā jana*), speaking different languages (*Vivāchasaḥ*) and following different religions (*Nānā-dharma* A.V. XII. 1.). The Indus Valley culture, therefore, is not an exotic or disturbing factor but a basic yarn in the varied texture of Indian culture through the ages.

4. VEDIC ARTS AND CRAFTS

CRAFTS IN THE VEDAS—We learn from the Vedic literature about some arts and crafts executed in material media, although up to now no actual relics have been traced. There are references to *Stūpa* (as in Hiraṇya Stūpa), *Yūpa* or sacrificial post with a rope and a top-ring (*Chashāla*) which were fashioned by felling timber trees by expert carpenters known as *Yūpa-vraska*. The workmen possessed tools made of copper (*Āyasī-vāśī*) for cutting stately forest trees (*Vanaspati*) of a hundred or a thousand branches (*Śatavalśa, Sahasravalśa*).

VIŚVAKARMĀ—There is repeated emphasis on the creation of forms of great variety (*Puru-rūpa*), by Indra with his intrinsic power, and by Tvashṭā, 'Shaper' with an actual technique of cutting and chiselling (*rūpa piṁśana*). The deity of creation Viśvakarmā is compared to a smith (*Karmāra*) working at his furnace and smelting metals for forging various objects, the process being called *Saṁdhamana* (RV. X. 72.2). Even the mighty gods are said to be produced by the smelting of their substance on fire in the furnace.

ŚILPA—Craftsmanship was known as *Śilpa*, a well built body being *Suśilpa*, and the maker of a beautiful form as *Surūpa-kṛitnu*. The Goddess of Beauty was Śrī with her companion Lakshmī. The opposite of Śrī was A-Śrī and an ugly face was *A-Srīla* whereas a beautiful face was *Supratīka*. It seems that men and women were fond of cultivating beauty both of forms and general appearance by improving their dress, hair-style and ornaments, as indicated by a number of beauty denoting words in the Ṛigveda. Gold-embroidered cloth (*Hiraṇyamaya Drāpi*), a high pointed head dress (*Opaśa*), figured drapery (*Peśas*), woollen cloth (*Ūrṇā*) and coats of tanned sheap-skin (*Pavasta*) are mentioned. *Opaśa* was a fan-like decoration rising several inches above the forehead and secured by a fillet. *Kurīra* often mentioned with it was a pannier-like cone for the ear. Hair was arranged in braded locks sometimes four for young women (*Chatushkapardā yuvatiḥ supeśāḥ*, RV. X. 114,3), the bunch of twisted hair on the back of the head being *Kumbā* (cf. *koppu*, Hindi *khopā*). Once a belle is called *Svopaśā, Sukurīrā* and *Sukapardā* (VS. 11.56).

WEAVING—Reference to cotton cloth is absent in Ṛigveda although wool was much in vogue, e. g. *Śamulya* (probably the same as *samūr*) and *Dūrśa* (class. Sans. *Dūshya*, Hi. *dhussā*). The art of weaving was *Vayana*, the loom *Tantra*, the warp *Tata*, the shuttle *Tasara*. The imagery of the loom is applied to Time weaving the cosmic texture with the twin yarns of Night and Day. In a passage the mother is said to be weaving

the garment for her son (RV. V. 47.6, *Vastrā putrāya mātaro vayanti*). Yarn or thread was known as *Sūtra* and *Tantu*.

CART-WRIGHT—The craft of a cart-wright (*Rathakāra*) was quite developed; frequent mention being made of chariot (*Ratha*), axle (*Aksha*), wheel (*Chakra*), spokes (*Ara*), nave (*Nabhya*), felly (*Pradhi*), rim (*Nemi*), body of the chariot (*Kośa*), seat (*Bandhura*, also *Garta*), pole (*Ishā*), yoke (*Yuga*), a movable stand to hold the chariot (*Rathavahana*) and the fore-part of a chariot (*Ratha-mukha*). The heavy country-cart was *Anas* or *Śakaṭī* (RV. X. 146.3).

UTENSILS—A number of household utensils give an idea of the crafts behind them, e. g. *Amatra* (a vessel), *Āhāva* (a bucket), *Ukhā* (a cooking pan), *Udañchana* (a bucket for lifting water from a well), *Kaṁsa* (a metal pot), *Kalaśa* and *Kumbha* (water pots), *Chamasa* (big bowl), *Charu* (cauldron), *Kadruka* (a *loṭā*), *Droṇa* (large wooden vessel), *Dṛiti* (leather bag), *Parīṇahya* (household utensils), *Maṇika* (water-bottle), *Śūrpa* (wicker-work basket), *Sthālī* (cooking pot), *Sushirā Sūrmi* (a hollow tube), *Dṛishad* (pounding-stone), etc.

OCCUPATIONS—The different arts were developed as occupations of special workers, e.g. a plough-man (*Kīnāśa*, *Kṛishīvala*), smith (*Karmāra*), fisherman (*Kaivarta*), herdsman (*Gopa*), boatman (*Nāvāja*), barber (*Nāpita*), bow-maker (*Jyākāra*), carpenter (*Takshā*, *Tashṭā*), smelter (*Dhmātṛi*), cook (*Paktṛi*), hand-clapper (*Pāṇigha*), basket-maker (*Bidalakārī*), jeweller (*Maṇikāra*), washerman (*Malaga*), rope-makar (*Rajju-sarja*), dyer (*Rajayitṛi*), acrobat (*Vaṁśa-nartin*), weaver (*Vayaṭṛi*), maker of winnowing baskets (*Sūrpakāra*), gold-smith (*Hiraṇya-kāra*), flute player (*Vīṇā-gāthin*, *Viṇā-vāda*), etc.

HOUSE-BUILDING—Building art was quite evolved, as shown by terms about architectural lay-out and the several parts of a building pillar as the main support of a building was called *Skambha*. Indra is *Skabhīyān*, best possessor of pillars (RV. X. 111. 5). The building was measured out (*dhāma mame*) and supported on pillars (*skambhena adhāryat*, RV. VIII. 41, 10). There is a reference to three pillars made stable in their foundations which gives a good picture of a vaulted or conical roof (*Trayaḥ skambkāsaḥ skabhitāsaḥ*, RV. I. 34. 2). The foundation is called *Dharuṇa* on which the pillar was raised (*Skambhaṁ dharuṇe* R.V. X. 44. 4). A big pillar was praised as *Mahat Skambha* (RV. VI. 47. 5), having a tall shaft (*Varshman*, R. V. III. 8. 3), raised aloft (*Ūrdhvaṁtishṭha*, RV. III. 8. 1) and considered to be an emblem of universal prosperity (*Uchchhrayasva mahate Saubhgāya*, RV. III. 8. 2) as a Yūpa or Indra's Banner. The word *stabhanāt* has been used for a pillar (*Skambhanena stabhanāt*, RV. VI. 47. 5), giving the later word *Stambha*. Expert wood-workers went to the

forest, selected the stately tree and felled it with their axes (*Vanaspate Svadhitistataksha*, RV. III. 8. 6.).

ARCHITECTURAL LAY-OUT—There are several names for the house *Dama, Gṛiha, Pastyā, Sadana, Duroṇa, Harmya.* It had three main parts, a clear scheme which continued throughout as the basic lay-out of a house or palace in India. The first part was the door with its forecourt (*Dvāra*), the second *Sadas*, corresponding to the *Āsthāna-maṇḍapa, Sabhā, Āsthāyikā* of later literature. This was the male apartment or the room for receiving guests and holding public audiences in the royal palaces. The third element consisted of a female apartment called *Patnī sadana*, same as *antaḥpura.* In Vedic times a fourth part of the house was *Agniśālā* in which the sacred fires were kept. This later on became the *Devagṛiha* portion of a palace. A house was regularly planned and measured (*Nimita, Mita*, AV. 9. 3. 19). There were several kinds of houses both big and small, e. g. *Māna* and *Śālā*, the former denoting a rich man's house or palace (*Bṛihat Māna*, RV. VII. 88. 5), and the latter a middleman's average house. We read of *Mahāśālā* in the Upanishads. The Ṛigveda refers to *Sahasra-sthūṇa*, a house on a thousand pillars, adorned with gold inlay (*Hiraṇya-rūpa*) on a sheeting of copper (*Ayaḥ-sthūṇam*, RV. V. 62. 5). A grandiose structure resting on a thousand columns is stated to be a *Sadas*, which could only be a public audience-hall (राजानौ ध्रुवे सदस्युत्तमे सहस्रस्थूण आसाते, RV. II. 41. 5.). We know the place of Sabhā and Samiti in Vedic polity, the latter forming an assembly of the people (*Viśaḥ*). It must have been to convene sessions of the *Samiti* that the need for a thousand-pillared hall with the king himself seated at one end was felt. There is also reference to a companion idea of a big house or palace having a thousand doors (*Sahsra-dvāra-gṛiha*) called *Bṛihanta Māna* (RV. VII. 88. 5), the main entrance being known as *Prathamā Dvār*, which was the same as *dvāra-koshṭha* of later times. We find also reference to *Śata-bhujī* and *Śata-dvāra*, a house with a hundred columns and a hundred doors. The ideal world was referred to as Thousand and real human life as Hundred. Houses had two, four, six, eight or ten walls (*Dvipakshā, Chatushpakshā, Shaṭ-pakshā, Daśapakshā*, AV. 9. 3. 21). The meaning of *pakshā* seems to be the same as in the dialects today, namely, wall (*Pakkhā*). A room was called *kulāya* and rooms within rooms were planned (*kulaye adhikulāyam*), and a storey as *kośa* of which several were superimposed (*Kośe-kośaḥ samubjitaḥ*, AV. 9. 3. 20.).

The house had open spaces as an integral part of its lay-out called *Udara*, same as *aṅgaṇa* or *ajira*, court-yard, in later times. This was spacious in the female apartments called *Pratīchī*, the back portion (*Pichhavāḍā*) as contrasted with the front portion which was the *Sadas* itself. The *Rājakula* portion of an Indian palace, also known as *Antaḥpura* consisted of the female apartments or living quarters of the king

and queens. In between the *Sadas* (the public hall) and the *Patnī-sadana* seems to have the site of the open courtyard where the *Havirdhāna* and *Agniśālā* were sited, corresponding to the temples in the later palaces.

DETAILS OF A HOUSE—An idea of the construction of a house may be obtained from several references in the Śālā-sūkta of the Atharvaveda (9. 3. 3). The first fact is that even houses of big dimensions were constructed of timber (यस्त्वा शाले निमिमाय स जभार वनस्पतीन्, 9. 3. 11.). This was the material of which the ideal house of Parameshṭhī Prajāpati was made and the same model was adopted by human beings (*Prajāyai chakre*).

A house was raised on a foundation pillar of big size, either one or more according to needs (*Skambha* and *Upamit*). It was the practice to support the roof on three rows of pillars (त्रयः स्कम्भासः स्कभितासः, RV. I. 34. 2.). On these upright pillars leaning rafters were placed as props (*Pratimit*). On the upright pillars in the middle which probably were higher than the others, was placed a strong cross-beam called *Parimit*, same as *Prāg-vaṁśa* of later literature. This structure was covered with bamboos (*Vaṁśa*) and held together by means of certain binding ropes and fastening devices. The general name for them was *Naddha*.

ROOFING—In preparing the thatched roof a number of unsplit bamboos (*Vaṁśa*) were laid in parallel rows (now called *kore*), secured at one end by a stout rope made of twisted *Muñja* grass (now called *jūn*, Sanskrit *Yūna*) which seems to be the same as *Prāṇāha* of the Śālā-sūkta. The bamboos were tightly held cross-wise also by other strings referred to here as *Nahana* (*Vaṁśānāṁ nahanānām*, AV. 9. 3. 4.). Two processes were distinguished, the first a net-work of unsplit bamboos with cross-wise split bamboos above it. This was the *Āyāma*, a squre or rectangular frame-work now called *Ṭhāṭa* or *Ṭhaṭṭara*. The second process was covering it with several layers of straw which is referred to here as *Barhaṇa* (*Saṁ-babarha*, AV. 9. 3. 3) similar to the *Barhir-āstaraṇa*, spreading the stew on altar), now called *Bichhāvan* or *Aṭakana* or *Phiṭakarī*. This was again covered by split bamboo sticks and the upper and lower layers were fastened by knots called *Granthi* (*Granthīṁś, chakāra te dṛiḍhān*, AV. 9. 3. 3), same now called *gūnth* (गूँथ). In the same *Sūkta* two words are used in connection with a thatched house ; (i) *Tṛiṇa*, which refers to the several kinds of grasses, like Muñja, Śara, Kuśa, Kāsa, Vīrana, etc., and (ii) *Palada* which denoted the straw obtained from rice and wheat plants (तृणैरावृता पलदान्वसाना, AV. 9. 3. 17). Strong ropes to prevent the thatched roof from slipping down and keeping it secured to the main beams and pillars were known as *Parishvañjalya*, *Sandaṁśa* denoted a clamp or strut. The sling-pendants inside the house from the roofs were called *Śikya* (*Antaḥ śikyāni*, AV. 9. 3. 6). The ridge in the centre

called *Parimit* (later *Prāchīna-vaṁśa* or *Prāg-vaṁśa*; now बलैंडा from Sanskrit *Bala-daṇḍa*) was called *Vishuvat*, because this central beam divided the roof in two portions. Over this were placed a number of protuberant pots, each of which covered a hole (*Aksha*) in the roof as an outlet for smoke (later on known as *Dhūmanetra*, Pali, *Dhūmanetta*, at present *Naina, Nainuā*). This architectural feature and been perfected in Vedic times and referred to in the Atharva as *Sahasrāksha Opaśa*, the thousand-eyed protuberants arranged in a line on the middle ridge (ओपशं विततं सहस्राक्षं विषूवति, AV. 9. 3. 8.). A house was made beautiful (*Raṇya*), decorated and was the object of attraction for all (*Viśva-vārā*). An idea of its roof is given by comparing it with a standing female-elephant (*Hastinī padvatī mitā Prithivyāṁ tishṭhati*, 9. 3. 17.). This refers to the vaulted roofing which we see in a developed form in the Chaitya-halls of Western India.

Attached to the house in the first court were also the broad spaces for cows and horses, both of whom formed an essential part of the domestic economy in Vedic times (*Aśvāvatī Gomatī śālā, 3.12.2., Gobhyo Aśvebhyo namo yachchhālāyāṁ Vijāyate, 9. 3. 13*). A house is compared to a beautiful bride (*Vadhūmiva te Śāle*, 9.3.24) and the same is still current in the saying that the decoration of a house is similar to that of a bride. A Vedic house-holder (*Śālā-pati*) adored his house like a goddess, since it was the real place where the whole cycle of life was unfolded for him. He felt happy to think of the delightful home overflowing with stores of food and milk, free from hunger and thirst, and full of laughter and merriment.

This joyous spirit is reflected in another hymn devoted to *Śālā* and *Vāstoṣhpati* (AV. 3. 12) where besides referring to the joys of a happy family mention is also made of some architectural features, viz. its being thatched and having a big lay-out (*Bṛihat-chhanda*) both in loftiness and plan. It is also said that the big cross-beam (*Vaṁśa*, same as *Prāchīna-vaṁśa*) was supported on smaller wooden posts called *Sthūṇā* (*Sthūṇamabhiroha Vaṁśa*, AV. 3. 12. 6.). The Śatapatha refers to the house planned in two parts, the first one called *Pūrvārdha* was the same as *sadas* or the male apartment. It was here that the main upright pillar called *Varshishṭha Sthūṇārāja* was erected (ŚB. 3. 5. 1. 1). As to orientation it is stated that the Gods preferred it to be east-west (*Prāchīna vaṁśa*) and for human dwellings it was north-south (*Udīchīnavaṁśa*, ŚB. 3. 6. 1. 23).

With all these specific details about the lay-out and architecture of a Vedic house it is not correct to say that 'very little is known of the structure of the house' (Vedic Index, I. 230). The fact is that many of the basic elements of house-building that we find in historical times were developed in Vedic times and those early architect perfected their plan of a standard house to suit the basic requirements of Indian life and climate.

We can say that the lay-out of an Āryan house is quite clear divided into three portions, viz. the first court for domestic animals, the second for men and the third as the women's apartment, the same is in the epic palaces of three courts called *Tri kakshā*. Subsequently the number of courts increased up to seven (*Sapta-Kakshā*) as mentioned in the *Harsha-charita*.

Another point is that the thatched palaces of later times were also named *Māna*, e. g. *Kāya-Māna* raised for Harsha on his tour, the temporary palace (*Māna*) which also served for royal offices (*Kāya*)).

Amongst specialised crafts that of the wood-worker (*Takshā*), metalsmith (*Karmāra*), arrow-smith (*Ishukāra*) and bow-maker (*Dhanushkāra*) and of the potter were important. Music and dancing were also cultivated and as later in the *Jātakas* and Pāṇini they were regarded as *Śilpa*. Indra is addressed as a dancer (*Nṛitu*) ; a female dancer was *Nṛitā*. Both vocal and instrumental music for the Sāman-chants was learnt ; a stringed instrument of the lute class (*Vīṇā*) and a harp with seven notes (*Sapta-tantrī*, *Saptadhātu Vīṇā*, RV. X. 32. 4). There is also mention of a *Śata-tantu* or *Śata-tantrī*, a hundred stringed lyre or harp. These instruments were constructad on the basis of seven notes or a heptatonic scale of music which has continued since then (*Vedic Index*, I. 283). The consciousness of physical beauty and a regular attempt to create such forms in material media distinguished the aesthetic response of the Vedic people, which became personified as the goddess Śrī-Lakshmī, whose worship continued throughout the later periods.

(b) VEDIC SYMBOLS IN ART

A important legacy received by Indian art from its Vedic sources of life and literature is the large number of symbols depicted from the earliest times.

I—DIVINITIES—*Śrī Lakshmī, Yaksha, Nāga, Sūrya, Chandra, Vāmana-Virāṭ* (dwarf and giant), *Ardhanārīśvara, Kumāra, Gaṇapati, Ambikā, Tryambaka* (three-eyed God), *Paśupati* (Lord of *Paśus*), *Mātṛikā* (One Universal Mother), *Dvimātā, Saptamātaraḥ* (Seven Mothers), *Sapta-svasāraḥ* (Seven Sisters), *Daśamātaraḥ* (Ten Mothers), *Tisraḥ Devī* (Three Goddesses, Three Mothers as *Ambā-Ambikā-Ambālikā*), *Samudra*, (Ocean), *Hiraṇyagarbha* (the Golden Egg, *Haimāṇḍa*), *Nārāyaṇa* (Deity of the Cosmic Ocean), *Daksha* (Goat-headed deity of *Yajña*), *Asura, Agni* (Fire), *Sahasrāksha* (thousand-eyed Deity (cf. Thousand-eyed Buddha figures on *thankās*), *Nṛitu* (Dancer of the *Tāṇḍava*), *Gandharva-Apsaras, Brahma* (same as *Yaksha*), *Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Aśvins* (horse-headed Twin Deities, cf. Dioscuri), *Gaṇa-Devatā* (Host-Deities), *Pramathas, Saptarshi* (Seven Sages), *Aṣṭamūrti Śiva, Kumbhamushka* (ithyphallic gnomes, same as *Kumbhāṇḍa*, AV. 11.9.17), *Chaturdaṁshṭra* (Four-tusked demons, AV. 11.9.17),

Nārada (the archetypal Sage of music and movement, AV. 12.4.24), *Keśinī* (Woman with dioshevelled hair, AV. 12.5.45, cf. the nude goddesses *Koṭṭavī* and *Kālikā*), *Rudra Mahādeva, Vishṇu, Yama, Viśvarūpā Nārī* (AV. 14.2.32, same as *Śatarūpā*, wife of Kaśyapa), *Agni-Soma* (Fire and Water principles, cf. Hot and Cold streams for Buddha's bath), etc.

II—Ideas & Concepts—*Svastika, Daivāsuram* (conflict between Angels and Titans), *Trivikrama* (Three Steps), *Jyotirliṅga* (Pillar of Light) *Pṛithu* and *Pṛithivī* (Milking of the Earth-Mother by the King, cf. Māndhātā and Sudassana motif in Buddhist literature), *Pṛithivi-Varāha* (Boar lifting the Earth, *Varāheṇa Pṛithivī Saṁvidānā*, AV. 12.1.48), *Sahasra-Purusha* (Thousand or Infinite Purusha, cf. *Sahasrātmā Buddha*), *Sapta-padī* (Seven Steps, cf. First Seven steps of Buddha), *Tirashchīna-nirgamana* (oblique birth of Indra, RV. IV. 18.2; also of Buddha; and of Skanda, Matsya 159.48); *Agni-Skandha* (Pillar of Fire, cf. *Jyotirliṅga*, Ensign of Light), etc.

III—Animals & Birds—*Paśu* (animals), *Suparṇa, Haṁsa, Daśaśīrsha Vatsa* (ten-headed Calf, AV. 13.4.6), *Dviśīrsha Vṛishabha* (two-headed Bull), *Dviśīrshṇī Suparṇī* (two-headed Eagle, also called *Ubhayataḥ-Śīrshṇī*, ŚB. 3.2.4.16), *Saptāśva* (Seven Horses), *Nandī* (Bull of pleasures), *Ananta* (thousand-headed cosmic Serpent), *Varāha* (Boar), *Vṛishabha-Dhenu* (Bull-Cow), *Deva-Jāta Aśva* (Divine Horse), *Mahisha* (Buffalo-demon), *Mahoraga* (Tritons), *Mahāsya Śvā* (Barking Dog, AV. 11.2.30, cf. hunting dogs of *Revanta*), *Chaturdaṁshṭra* (Four-tusked animals, as *Chaturdaṁshṭra Kesarī*), *Sahasra-Śṛiṅga Vṛishabha* (Thousand-horned Bull, AV. 13.1.12). *Haṁsa* (Golden Swan, AV. 13-3.14), *Airāvata* (White elephant of Indra, cf. Buddha as white elephant from Tushita heaven), etc.

IV—Articles & Objects—*Pūrṇa-Kumbha, Chakra, Yūpa, Skambha* (same as *Stambha*), *Indrayashṭi* (triangle-headed Standard), *Vaijayantī, Vedikā, Sapta-ratna* (cf. Seven Jewels of a Chakravartī), Triśūla (Trident), *Vajra* (Thunder-bolt), *Vasu-dhārā* (Shower of Gold), *Devaratha* (Divine Chariot, cosmic car of Time), *Ketu* (Banner), *Maṇḍala* (also *Kuṇḍala*, the two ear-rings motif), *Chamasa* (Bowl, Holy Grail), *Devaja Maṇi* (Auspicious Jewel, AV. 10.6.31), *Vasudhāna-Kośa* (Jewel Chest, AV. 11.2.11), *Araṇi* (Twin Churners), *Gharma* (Milk Boiler, also *Mahāvīra* or Miraculous Hero), *Apūpa* (Honey-cake), *Dhanur-Ishu* (Bow and arrow), *Kumbhī* (Vase, AV. 11.3.11; *Iyameva Pṛithivī Kumbhī*, the earth is the *Kumbhī*), *Charu* (Five-mouthed cauldron, AV. 11.3.18), *Nidhi* (Wealth Jar, AV. 12.1.44), *Bhujishya-Pātra* (Food Bowls AV. 12.1.60, cf. Buddha's begging bowl), *Chatur-Chamasa* (Four Cups, presented to the Buddha by the merchants), *madhu-kośa* (cup of honey presented to the Buddha), *Indrāsana* (high seat of Indra or Indra's throne on the ridge of heaven; cf. *Bodhimaṇḍa*), *Daivī-Nāva* (heavenly ship), etc.

V—TREES & FLOWERS—*Padma* or *Pushkara* (Lotus), *Kalpa-vriksha* (Wish-fulfilling tree), *Kalpalatā*, *Vanaspati*, *Puṇḍarīka* (Cosmic Lotus with nine holes and three pericarps, AV. 10.8.43), *Hiraṇyasraj* (Golden Garland), *Pushkara-Sraj* (Lotus garland, later called *Kiñjalkinī-mālā* of Gupta art), etc.

VI—MISCELLANEOUS—*Mithuna* (Man-Woman motif), *Chatasraḥ Pradiśaḥ* (Four Quarters), *Sumeru* (Golden Mountain), *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī* (Father-Mother Principle), *Vimāna* (Divine Mansion, *Devagṛiha*), *Salilam* (Water), *Vātaraśanā* (Nudity motif), *Mahā-Nagna* (Primeval Nude, same as *Digambara*), *Mahā-Nagnī* (same as Kāli, the Black Mother), *Pur* (Divine City, *Ayodhyā*), *Deva-Sadana* (abode of the Gods, also called *Nāka*; the former in Buddhism as *Harmikā* and the latter as *Sukhāvatī*), *Grāvāṇau* (Clashing Rocks), *Guhā*, *Agni-Guhā* (cf. Indra-śaila cave of Buddha's life), etc. It shows how rich the heritage of Vedic symbols was inherited in art, literature and mythology, and inspiring there new motifs and themes. Whatever be the religion, Indian tradition had accepted the above alphabet of symbols to build an elegant language of form and meaning (*Śabda* and *Artha*). Just as literature reflects the mind of India so does its art as a mirror of her soul. The concrete forms in Art have been made use of by the artists to interpret and vitalise the meanings and beliefs handed down through generations. A genuine study of Indian Art requires the understanding of the meaning of symbols created in antiquity and received as tradition by the people. For example, we may look into some of them.

Śrī-Lakshmī, is the consort of Vishṇu, the cosmic deity, a popular symbol of beauty and prosperity. From the time of the Purusha-Śūkta upto now her position as the symbol of a happy home has held the field. She is the Daughter of the Ocean, Lady of the Lake, depicted in art as a beautiful woman standing in a lotus-pond and bathed with heavenly waters by two or four elephants holding inverted jars in their trunks. The elephants are the quarters of Space and the jar is the recepticle of the Waters of Immortality. The waters of the pond symbolise the Infinite Ocean, i.e. the source or first cuase of the universe and the growing lotuses typify the sprouts of life manifesting in visible form. It should be remembered that a symbol develops an expanding meaning and many variations as to form and significance are valid.

The Tree refers to the Tree of Existence, as the *Pīpal* or the *Bodhi* tree, and the flower to the fruition of the inherent power in the tree, be it lotus, *Pārijāta*, *Mandāra* or any other variety. Vishṇu and Lakshamī typify the universal parents like Śiva and Pārvatī, Rādhā and Kṛishṇa, same as Dyāvā-Pṛithivī of the Vedas, being the two halves of a single primeval Egg, *Hiraṇyāṇḍa*. Lakshmī is depicted in the art of Bharhut, Sānchī, Amarāvatī, Bodh-Gayā, Mathura, etc. and it is not possible to put a religious label on her. The *Siri-Mā Devatā* at Bharhut is this symbol.

Yaksha, 'a wonderous being' of colossal size typified in a visible form Brahman himself (*Mahad-Yakshaṁ Bhuvanasya madhye* AV. 10.7.38), taking giant strides in fervour (*Tapas*), on the surface of the waters of creation. He is lofty like a tree on whose branches spreading from the stern sit hosts of Devas. This was a grand conception befitting a Supreme Deity, symbolising the mysterious principle of life and creation. The Yaksha-cult was a folk religion of the widest distribution which has come down from the Ṛigveda to our own times, and was accepted as much by the Buddhist as by the Jainas and the Brāhmaṇas. Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Arymā of the Vedas and Buddha and Mahāvīra of later times were compared to a Yaksha and the former even reckoned amongst lists of Yaksha dieties. Each village had its Yaksha and an annual festival called *Yakha maha* was held in their honour. Many Yaksha shrines (*Yakkha-chetiya*) are described in Jaina and Buddist texts.

Nāgas, were serpent deities of folk-cult represented both in a human and a serpent form. The conception was rooted in that of Vedic *Ahi*, signifying *Vṛitra* as the Dragon of the Deep (*Ahir-budhnya*) and also identified with *Ananta*, the cosmic serpent. The Nāgas were powers of the subterranean world but also elevated to the rank of Devatās. They typify the principle of Death (*Mṛityu*), and Darkness (*Tamas*) and Untruth (*Anṛita*), as against the Devas symbolising Immortality (*Amṛita*), Light (*Jyotiḥ*) and Truth (*Satyam*). Buddhism accorded to the Nāga deity a place of honour in the pantheon. There occurs an affair with a Nāga in the life of Buddha, Mahāvīra and Kṛishṇa and we find that like the serpent Vṛitra, the genius of evil, vanquished by Indra. Śiva also drinks poison and makes of the serpent an ornament on his body.

Sūrya and *Chandra* are two great symbols honoured from the Vedas up to now. The two opposite principles of Heat (*Ghraṁsa*) and Cold (*Hima*, AV. 13.1.46) are typified by them, as also the inseparable pair of the male and the female, father and mother, *Prāṇa* and *Apāna*, *Piṅgalā* and *Iḍā*. The pair of Sūrya and Chandra is depicted in Gupta art and also in Sasanian Iran, a common motif is found on the Kulah caps of the statuattes of Daṇḍa and Piṅgala attendants of Sūrya (*Chandra-divākara*). In folk lore the motif is repeated and also depicted in folk art up to our own day under the name of *Chandā-Sūraj*. The basal duality of the creative process appears as Sūrya and Chandra, the one changeless and eternal, resplendent with its own lustre, and the other waxing and waning with borrowed light; the former as the principle of *Buddhi* centred in the Divine and the latter of *Manas* pursuing the other.

Ardha-Nārīśvara, half-male and half-female, viz. two conjoint portions of a single egg is the biological pattern of life. The Veda speaks of it as Man and

Woman (*Tvaṁ Strī Tvaṁ Pumān*, AV. 108.27). Each woman is half-man and each man is half-woman (RV. I. 164.16). This is the nature of *Mithuna* or *Ardha-Nārīśvara* a composite form of Agni and Soma, is so graphically depicted in art from the Kushāṇa period onwards.

Kumāra, the miraculous babe, the wonderful hero, leader of the divine army, is the son of Agni and symbolises the principle of *Prāṇa* or life. There is a complex mythology under-lying the iconographic form of Kumāra as six headed son of six mothers, son of Gaṅgā, son of Agni, etc. An epic cycle of myth is associated with specially his conquest of Tārakāsura the latter typifying the lower mind and the former the death conquering principle of the divine power. Each life centre is a babe or Kumāra, the miraculous technique by which Nature has designed to perpetuate life in her laboratory.

Gaṇapati, mentioned in the Ṛigveda, was the symbol of *Brāhmaṇas-pati Soma*, the universal infinite ocean deemed as the primeval cause of creation. Its elephant head being biggest typifies the same, i.e. *Mahat*. Soma was also called *Madhu* (honey). Its symbol was the sweet cake (*Apūpa*) which in iconography becomes the sweet balls of the Gaṇeśa. The micky mouse shows the mind borrowing in earth or matter.

Ambikā, the Great Mother, also *Mahī-Mātā* in the Ṛigveda, fills a large canvas in early Indian Art. A number of Goddesses are her emanations, being variable as one, three, seven, ten, sixteen, etc. both in the Vedic and Paurāṇic theology. The *Sapta-Matṛikās* as the Śaktis of Śiva regularly appear from Kushāṇa art onwards. *Aditi, Haimvatī Umā, Pārvatī*, etc. are different names and aspects of the Goddess or Devī, who is differentiated as Sarasvatī-Lakshmī-Durgā in the triadic pattern of the cosmos.

Samudra, represents the primeval waters or sourse of creation, also called *Salilam, Apaḥ*. Brahman himself is a infinite ocean and his Mind also is *Samudra* (*Mano-vai Samudraḥ*. The ocean is depicted at Udaigiri in the Mahāvarāha panel. It is also part of the Samudra-manthana scenes later. *Nārāyaṇa*, the thousand-headed Purusha of the Ṛigveda and the Brāhmaṇas, is the same as Vishṇu residing in the milky ocean. He represents the *Hiraṇyagarbha* principle of life or Prāṇa abiding in the infinite source and taking birth as the omnipresent divinity both in the universal and the individual. The concept of *Nārāyaṇa* became favourite of the Bhāgavatas and repeated almost in every Purāṇa. In art it becomes the Anantśāyī Vishṇu as in a panel of the Deogarh temple.

Svastika, a solar symbol typifying the four-armed pattern of the cosmos spreading in the four directions. From this was developed the cult of Four Regions

(*Chatur mahā-diśaḥ*). The doctrine is found in Ṛigveda ; its followers in popular cult were known as *Diśā-vratika*. Each wheel or *Chakra* carries within its womb or centre a *Svastika* formed by combining four right angles of 90° each. The *Svastika* is the symbol *par excellence* of the four-fold divine principle (*Chatush-pād Brahma*), of which another significant form is four-faced Brahmā in art and mythology, the Tetradic Deity of the four basic types of manifestation. A chain of four-fold symbols as four Vedas, four Lokas, four Devas, four Quarters, four Varṇas, four Āśramas, four Priests, etc. is linked to this basic pattern of quadruplication.

Daivāsuram, the conflict between Devas and Asuras, Angels and Titans, represents the basic pattern of creation on the plane of matter. The powers of light are heavenly and immortal, those of darkness belong to the earth or matter and are mortal, bound by time and space. The celestial and the chthonic forces function at every level directed to cancel or overcome each other. The triumph of the Deva principle means life and of the Asura death. The whole pattern of Ṛigvedic myths is cast into the Daivāsuram mould which serves both in literarure and art as their life breath. Buddh's tempatation by Māra, Śiva's victory over Kāma, Devī's conflict with Mahisha,and a number of other themes offer a commentary on this basis cosmic myth. The Garuḍa-Nāga struggle depicted in Mathura art is a part of this symbolism, which in the Suparṇa Saga (*Sauparṇākhyāna*) appear as the Sauparṇas (heavenly birds) and Kādraveyas (the black serpents of dark regions) and enter into rivalry for obtaining mastery over the Cosmic Horse, viz. Sūrya. The Deva and Asura myths have a wide range and are found in all nations, holding the key to their religious beliefs and art form. A statement of surprising clarity is made in the Ṛigveda itself (RV. X. 5. 2., repeated in ŚB. 11. 1. 6,10) that all that men recount about the battles of Indra with the Asuras is pure illusion, for no enemy Indra ever had to fight. No historical basis need be tracad in these myths as the same deprives them of the truth of their vital purpose at several levels.

Trivikrama, the Three Steps of Vishṇu, was a Vedic motif transferred to the Purāṇic legend of Vāmana and Virāṭ, equally a theme of art and poetry. It is the symbol of triple motion, viz. centripetal and centrifugal and the principle of rest abiding in the centre. Movement is essential for life. It is the same as Time whose dynamism is pushing the worlds ahead. Life is governed by the three steps of past, present and future and each unit of time both big and small has these three divisions visualised as the process of growth. By this irresistible process the dwarf (*Vāmana*) becomes the giant (*Virāṭ*). Where life functions growth is inevitable, typified as the presence of Trivikrama Vishṇu.

Jyotirliṅga, the banner of light, was an ancient symbol since Brahman and all the Gods are *Jyotiḥ*, the ensign (*Ketu*) or Liṅga of the unmanifested essence of the Creator. Sūrya is the visible *Jyotirliṅga* which stands in axial alignment with millions of other Suns and is, therefore, without measure at both its ends. The Māheśvara teachers made capital of this idea and it found a happy representation in art. Similar are other aspects of Śaiva theology speaking of him in a variety of forms, e.g. Kāmāntaka, Yogeśvara, Dakshiṇāmūrti, etc. which possess valuable religious intimations and formed a significant alphabet of art motifs. The whole idea of Śiva was rooted in the Vedic conception of Rudra being another name of Agni. Rudra's son Skanda is also a scion of Agni.

Suparṇa, the Eagle which is the same as Garuḍa, being the symbol of Sūrya, Time, Saṁvatsara, Agni and for the matter of that of each god associated with movement. The universal spirit is Suparṇa or Eagle and its individual counterpart on earth is a Quail. The former dives at the latter to hold it in its clutches. The Garuḍa-Nāga motif of art is an extension of the Suparṇa myth. In the Ṛigveda we read of one, two, three or many Suparṇas.

Mahisha, the Buffalo-demon vanquished by the Great Goddess, is the type of riotous energy which challenges the supreme mother of the Gods. He is mentioned as *Gaura* (*Bos Gaurus*, RV. V. 58. 2) and *Mahisha* (RV. X. 189. 2). He is a form of Vṛitra who challenges Indra or the power of the Sun.

Pūrṇa-Kumbha, Pot and Foliage, Full Vase, was the symbol of plenty and creativity. The water in the jar is the sap or *humidas radicle* (*Salilam, Ṛitam, Āpaḥ*) and the over-flowing leaves and flowers typify life itself with its manifold blessings and joys. The human body is *Pūrṇa-Ghaṭa* and so is the created cosmos. The *Pūrṇa-Kalaśa* or *Bhadra-Kalaśa* of the Ṛigveda is filled with the immortal sap of Soma, the *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* of Atharva with streams of *Ghṛita* and *Amṛita* (AV. 3. 12. 8). The home is the *Maṅgala-Ghaṭa, Maṅgala-Kalaśa* and actually beautified with it (*Puṇṇaghaṭa-Paṭimaṇḍita ghara*). The motif of a Dame with the Well-filled Pitcher is mentioned as *Pūrṇa-Kumbha-Nārī* in Atharva (3. 12. 8) and as *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa-Kanyā* in the Lalita-Vistara, amongst walking in the Lumbinī procession of Māyā Devī. In art the motif is seen at Bharhut, Sānchī, Amarāvatī, Mathura, Kapiśā, Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā, Sarnath, Anurādhāpur, Borobudur, etc. It is combined with Pillar both in the basement and on top, and also in the figures of Gaja Lakshmī. In Jaina manuscripts it is given an anthropomorfic form, and in religious worship it is regarded as the symbol of Trinity.

Chakra, is the symbol of the Sun or Time (*Kāla-chakra*), Cosmos (*Bhava-chakra, Saṁsāra-chakra*), Life (*Jīvana-chakra*), and of the transcendent creative power (*Brahma-chakra*), distinguished by rhythmic or cyclic movement (*Chhando-gati*).

It is identified with the supreme moral order in the form of *Dharma-chakra* and *Sudarśana-chakra*, both having a thousand spokes (*Sahasrāra*). The number of spokes is variable as 3 (*Tryara*), 5 (*Pañchāra*), 6 (*Shaḍara*), 12 (*Dvādaśāra*), according to the varying divisions of Time units in the year. This elasticity is the quality of a symbol pointing to its exploding meaning at several levels. The year being conceived as *Kāla-chakra*, it is possible to look upon the seasons as 3, 4, 5 or 6. *Chakra* is also equal to *Ratha*, both signifying movement, the former being the source of word 'circle' and the latter of 'rota'. The Sarnath Aśokan Pillar was a *Chakra-stambha*, the like of which also occurs in Jaina Art of Mathura. In the Rigveda it is called the perfect wheel (*Vṛitta-chakra of Vishṇu*, RV. I. 155. 6), which later on was named the *Sudarśana-chakra* by the Bhāgavatas.

Yūpa, the pillar of sacrifice, typified the *Axis Mundi*, the cosmos being a Yajña. The sacrificial stake is the World-Pillar (*Skambha*); the Divyāvadāna speaks of a Yūpa as the sign of *Dharma* (*Dharma-chihna*), which is the same as *Dharma-stambha*, a pillar with a *Chakra* on its summit like the Sarnath Capital, which reminds of a Chakravartī king firm in his duty or Dharma, or piety, morality and law. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the portion of *Yūpa* inside the ground is said to belong to the Asuras, that up to the rope (*Raśanā*) to men, up to the ring (*Chashāla*) to the Gods and above it the *Deva-sadana* to the highest Sādhya-Devas. This tallies with the four-fold division of a Stūpa which constituted the rendering of the idea of Yūpa in a different form. The *Deva-sadana* portion was the same as *Harmikā*, the abode of gods or their seat in the highest heaven.

Skambha, a support or pillar with a lofty height (*Uchchhraya Varshaman*) was erected on the earth as the symbol of both the absolute Brahman (*Jyeshṭha-Brahma*) and the created cosmos (Skambha-sūkta, AV. 10.7.). All the worlds and all the gods reside within the *Skambha*. The pillar was regarded as the perfect symbol of the highest Creator (*Parameshṭhī Prajāpati*). *Indra-yashṭi*, Pole of Indra, was a banner erected in honour of Indra, god of rain and thunder and genius of festivity and joy of the community. This was an Indo-European symbol. Its visible form being a stately forest tree raised with much eclat and ceremony. The triangle-headed banner on a post, seen on ancient Punch-marked coins of silver may be identified as *Indra-yashṭi* or *Vaijayantī*. Its festival was known as *Indra-maha*.

Sapta-Ratna, mentioned for the first time in the Rig veda as the gift of Agni in each home, was later transferred in the Buddhist and Purāṇic literature to a Chakravartī King. These included a *Chakra-Ratna* (wheel of Law), *Hasti-Ratna*, *Aśva-Ratna*, *Maṇi-Ratna*, *Strī-Ratna*, *Gṛihapati-Ratna* and *Pariṇāyaka-Ratna* (Wise Counsellor).

Padma, also called *Pushkara*, the Lotus, is the highest Indian symbol in art, religion and cosmology, of life floating on the surface of creative waters. It is the flower opening its petals to the rising Sun. Sūrya is the symbol of Brahma, the Supernal Sun in heaven, and the Lotus is the flower of life blossoming on earth ; it is the visible sign of consciousness (*Prāṇa*) in matter (*Bhūta*). A gamut of meanings is associated with the lotus. It symbolises the principle of growth, rising from the immortal navel of Vishṇu or the cosmic deity whose 'awakening' throws up the lotus as the seat of Brahmā, the genius of emanation (*Brahma ha vai Brahmāṇaṁ Pushkare sasṛije* Gopatha, 1. 1. 16). The lotus-leaf typifies the womb of creation (*Yonirvai Pushkara-parṇam*, Śatapatha, 6.4.1.7). Lotus is also the cosmic mind (*Sahasrāradala Kamala*), and of the centre of energy in the individual. A detailed metaphysical doctrine of the Bhāgavatas explains the birth of the cosmos form a lotus (*Padmajā Sṛishṭi*) in distinction to the other belief of the world from the Golden Egg (*Aṇḍajā Sṛishṭi*). The womb of the individual and the universal mother giving birth to the child is symbolised as the lotus growing in water. The *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa* symbol combines both of them.

Kalpa-Vṛiksha, the Wish-fulfilling Tree, was churned as a jewel from the Ocean. It is the symbol of Mind, where *Kalpa* signifies 'thought' or 'idea'. What one wishes under the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* tree one obtains. Mind is the instrument of such a will. Life itself is a *Kalpa-vṛiksha*. One gets out of it as one wills. Home also is a veritable *Kalpa-vṛiksha*, its various branches are father, mother, brothers, sisters, producing all that the young man or woman wishes, of which food, ornaments, clothes and articles of beauty are only gross forms. The *Kalpa-vṛiksha* is a tree of heaven, with Gods seated on its branches and leaves. It is the tree of dense foliage (*Supalāśa*). The tree has four main boughs in four directions, which link it with the four-fold pattern of life and the world. Pairs of eternal Man and Woman (*Mithuna* are produced on this heavenly tree, viz. the home with its sacrament of marriage which brings about the union of the two parents. In the Uttara Kuru idealogy *Kalpa-vṛiksha* plays an important part, being described in the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Mahā-vāṇija Jātaka, Purāṇas, Jaina texts and classical Saṁskṛit literaure. It is depicted in detail at Bharhut, Bhaja, Sāṇchī, etc. The *Mithuna* motif continuing on the door-jambs of temples and caves was derived from the same source. The Jaina texts speek of kinds of *Kalpa-vṛiksha* trees. The *Kalpa-latā* or meandering creeper was a rendering of this motif very popular in early Indian Art, showing a wealth of ornaments and fabrics pendant from the tendrils of the creeper. Another derived motif was the *Nārī-latā* or *Kāma-latā* depicted on a pillar from Garhwal.

Sumeru, the golden mountain, the immortal centre of the Universe, holding all the other mountains and continents on its periphery, is the symbol of the immov-

able centre of the world. It is the source of four great rivers flowing in four directions, typifying the four-fold flux of life. It is the abode of all the Gods. Himālaya which enters so much in art and myth is said to be a friend of Meru.

Buddha, whatever may be said of him as Gautama the Man, has been rendered in art with a gushing acceptance of an ancient symbolism from the Vedas. The Lokottaravādin biographers of the Buddha, as in *Lalitavistara*, wholeheartedly admitted the strands of yore for weaving the rich texture of Buddha's life. What is the meaning of the white elephant, of oblique birth, seven steps, first bath, Bodhi-tree, Māra, Indra-śaila cave, Honey gift by the monkey, conversion of four bowls into one, miracle of fire and water and assumption of the Thousand-Buddha form ? The answer to these questions is a despair of the Buddhist texts; the key lies in the long tradition of Vedic and popular symbols. Buddha is Sūrya, the white elephant is the principle of universal consciousness incarnating in the individual centre; oblique birth is the appearance of life from an unknown source which is neither up nor below; the First Bath of hot and cold streams is a dip in the duality of Agni and Soma; the honey was the symbol of Soma or immortal knowledge, light and life; the monkey is the ancient Vṛishākapi, a friend of Indra; Indra's cave is a Vedic idea where Agni was first lit or the light first appeared; the conversion of four cups into one is reverse of what the Vedic Ṛibhus did in making four of the one original bowl, viz. a tatradic cosmos from a single cause; Fire and Water miracles are plainly of metaphysical import and are remind of the two views in the Ṛigveda of the Waters (*Āpo-Bhūyishṭha*) and Fire (*Agni-bhūyishṭha*) views of creation (RV. I. 161 9).

The *Chakra-Stambha* was identical with the ancient *Yūpa* as stated in the Divyāvdāna itself. Both the *Dharma-Chakra* and the *Sudarśana-Chakra* have a thousand spokes and are symbols of the transcendent beyond the categories of time and space. Thus, the Buddha's life striding as colossus in Indian Art, is virtually a radiating bunch of symbols, and ceases to have meaning if torn from its essential context. It is cast in the same mould as the mythical feats of Vishṇu or Śiva. The begging bowl of Buddha (*Bhikshā-Pātra*) traces its descent from the Food Bowl (*Bhujishya-Pātra*, AV. XII. 1.60) of the Creator entrusted to Mother Earth, the Universal Mother *Annapūrṇā*. In this domain lines of separation or cult boundaries disappear and we find ourselves face to face with a language which is of universal significance and employed to expound the metaphysical truths of Perennial Philosophy (*Sanātana Dharma*; cf. *Dhammo Sanantano* of the Buddha).

It may be noted that Indian aesthetics lay stress on both aspects of art, namely, its inner meaning and outer form (*Artha and Rūpa*). Without meaning art

is jajune, mere portraiture or external representation regarded as unheavenly (*Asvargya*). Kālidāsa hinted at it as the conjoint aesthetic principle of '*Vāk* and *Artha*', inseparable like the two universal parents (*Pārvatī-Parmeśvara*). The same pair is named *Antarvedi* and *Bahirvedi* aestehtic approach (Vishṇudharmottara, 3. 1. 2). It should be the endeavour of a true artist and a true connoisseur (*Silpī* and *Vichakshaṇa*) to take interest in either of them. The artist creates the art forms with the power of his mind (*Chitta*) and the critic understands the form and meaning in the measure of the deep joy in his soul. This is complete Indian aesthetics or the doctrine of *Rasa*. A true search in the mystery of literatute is needed to discover the meaning as envisaged both in art and literature. The worship of both *Artha* and *Rūpa* was a passion of the creative mind in India. Art, Religion, Poetry and Philosophy are like the four teats of the mother of wisdom, *Sarasvatī*, whose milk flowing from a common breast streams thousand-fold. The ancient Vedic literature in the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas, Pāli and Āgama texts, Buddhist and Jaina Sanskrit commentarial texts of later times, and the Purāṇas together with the Kāvyas, knit by one unifying Thread Spirit (*Sūtrātmā*). Their human message of unity and diversity is writ large on the face of Indian Art and inspired the artist to serve both Man and God, or the kindred points of heaven and home. Art became a way of life, a purposive endeavour. The wise writer of the Divyāvadāna assesses it from the aesthetic point of view. The motifs of art had both a decorative (*Śobhanārtha*) and a spiritual value for life (*Ārakshaṇārtha*, Divyāvadāna p. 221).

CHAPTER V

5 (a). ART IN THE MAHĀ-JANAPADA PERIOD [CIRCA 1500 B. C. TO 500 B. C.]

The story of Āryan civilization progresses from the moving Janas or clans of the Vedic age to the Janapada States in which the mobile communities entered upon a stage of "land-taking" or land-settlement in well defined areas called *Janapada*. The Janapada State synchronises with the literature which refers to it, viz. the Brāhmaṇas, Śrauta Sūtras, Pāli Tripiṭaka, Jaina Āgamas, and the Ashṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini, who gives a detailed picture of the cultural features of the Janapada units, as well as of their ruling aristocracies called *Jānapadins*.

The Buddhist literature speaks of sixteen Mahā-Janapadas stretching from Kamboja in the Pamir to Aśmaka with capital at Pratishṭhāna (Paithan) on the Godāvarī. The Jaina literature also mentions 24 Janapadas. The Purāṇas go further and give a longer list of more than 100 names beginning from Kamboja in the north to Aṅga-Vaṅga in the east and from Sauvīra in the west to Aparānta, Mūshika and Māhishaka in the south. I have discussed at length the cultural elements and the political background of the Janapadas in my book *'India as known to Pāṇini'*, (ch. II. pp. 48-74).

The intellectual activity as evolved by the Vedic *Charaṇas*, or Academies of Learning was of the highest order in which foundations of many sciences or fields of study (*Vidyā*) were laid, e.g. grammar, exegesis, phonetics, astronomy, medicine, dramaturgy, architecture, law (*Dharma*), besides an elaborate development of the Vedic and domestic ritual. Similarly *Śilpa*, i.e. arts and crafts, received wide attention and were cultivated as so many professions by expert craftsmen for which a new word, viz. *Jānapadī-vṛitti* was introduced in the language (Pāṇini, 4. 1. 42). Expert professions and crafts began even in the Vedic age as shown by the *Śata-Rudrīya* Chapter of the Yajurveda, e. g. physicians (*Bhishak*), trader (*Vaṇij*), house-builder (*Sthapati*), makers of bows, arrows and quivers (*Dhanvin, Ishumat, Dhanushakṛit, Ishukṛit, Ishudhimat*), carpenters or timber fellers (*Takshā*), Cart-wrights (*Rathakāra*), potter (*Kulāla*), blacksmith (*Karmāra*), maker of coats of mail and armour (*Varma, Kavacha* and *Āyudha*), architects who were expert in *Vāstu-vidyā* (*Vāstavya* and *Vāstuka*), makers of beds (*Talpa*) and mattings (*kaṭa*), weaver (*Vayatṛi*), agriculturist (*Kīnāśa*), grain-dealer (*Annānāṁpati*), warrior, boatsman (*Nāvāja*) with oar (*Aritra*), raft (*Dyumna*), ship (*Nau*) and rudder (*maṇḍa*), dyer (*Rajayitṛi*), ropemaker (*Rajju-sarja*), lute-player (*Vīṇā-gāthin*), barber (*Vaptṛi*), cook (*Śrapayitṛi*), elephant-keeper

(*Hastipa*), worker in gold (*Hiraṇyakāra*), jewellers (*Maṇikāra*), basket-maker (*Vidalakārī*), embroiderer (*Peśitṛi, Peśaskāri* for a female), smelter (*Dhmātṛi*), drum-beater (*Dundubhyāghāta*), physician (*Talava*), corn-grinder (*Upala-prakshiṇī*), plough-man (*Kṛishīvala*). Names of musical instrments are given, e. g. *Vīṇā* (lute), *Nāḍī* (reed flute), drum (*Dundubhi*), *Kāṇḍa-vīṇā* (a kind of lute), *Karkarī* (a variety of lute), *Āḍambara* (drum), *Āghāṭi* (cymbal), *Lambara* (a kind of pendant drum), *Bhūmi-Dundubhi* (a big drum placed on the ground).

The above list gives proof of the development of several branches of arts and crafts under the general names of *Śilpas*, viz. science of music (*Gandharva-veda*), *Āyurveda*, *Dhanurveda* and *Vāstuveda*.

Under *Gandharva-veda* or music was also cultivated the science of dramaturgy or *Nāṭya* of which the earliest reference is found in Pāṇini mentioning the dramaturgical texts produced in the Vedic Schools of Śilālin and Kṛiśāśva. The ancient tradition of Śilālin's *Naṭa-sūtras* was handed down in the School of Bharata. It appears that the above four Upa-Vedas dealing with the practical arts useful for life began to be cultivated originally under the aegis of the Vedic Academies (*Charaṇas*) with the approval of those very teachers who were occupied with the study of Vedic texts. This healthy tradition gained in strength and popularity in course of time, leading to the independent organisation of *Śilpas* and allied sciences. The Śrauta-Sūtras and the *Jātakas* give a vivid picture of the bee-hive activity in the villages by members following different Śilpas who had become organised into local guilds (*Śreṇī*) mentioned conventionally as 18 (*aṭṭhādasa Sippa, Jātaka* II. 243). *Sippas* were of two kinds, superior and inferior (*Ukhaṭṭha-Sippa, Hīna-Sippa*, Vin. 4.6). Generally the Śilpins received social honour from the people and also from kings and rulers, e. g. we learn of potters being invited by the king to manufacture bricks, big and small cooking utensils required for Yajña (Baudhāyana ŚS, 15.14). A number of other pots and plates and pitchers as well as storage vessels like *Kumbha, Kumbhī, Kusūla* were manufactured and the potters seem to have had a flourishing trade in ceramics for which a new term *Kaulālaka* was introduced in the language. From his making vessels of many shapes for storing waters, *ghṛita*, oil and grains, the potter received the new title of *Kumbha-kāra*.

The most important profession amongst craftsmen was that of the carpenter (*Takshā*) and chariot-maker (*Rathakāra*) who formed a separate class probably superior in rank and honour to the ordinary wood-worker. The carpenters were busy with making of sacrificial *Yūpas* (*Vanaspati*), pillars for buildings (*Sthūṇā*) and many kinds of wooden utensils as *Droṇa-kalaśa, Chamasa* and *Soma* drinking cups (*Graha*). We have seen that the art of the goldsmith had been highly developed

in the Indus Valley and the Vedic age. The same tradition continues in the Sūtra period when the *Svarṇakāra* and *Maṇikāra* artists were called upon to manufacture many kinds of ornaments, e. g. ear-rings (*Karṇa-veshṭaka*), circular pendants for necklaces (*Nishka*), a special ornament called *Rukma* dotted with twenty-one studs and worn round the neck (cf. *Graiveyaka* and also golden chains ; *Suvarṇa-sraj*).

The Śrauta Sūtras refer to workers in stone, manufacturing mortars and pestles, mill-stones and vessels. The Āśvalāyana Gṛihya Sūtra mentions four kinds of vessels, made of copper, other metals, stone or clay (Āśva GS. 4. 3. 18 ; 4. 7. 8).

PĀLI LITERATURE—The Dīgha Nikāya gives a list of 25 major Śilpas (*Puthu-sippāyatana*) as *Kumbhakāra*, *Naḍakāra* (reed-worker), *Peśakāra* (embroiderer), *Rajaka* (dyer), *Mālākāra* (garland-maker), *Kappaka* (barber), *Chelaka* (weaver), *Dhanuggaha* (bow-fighter), *Rathika* (charioteer) (Sāmañña-phala Sutta 14). A fuller list occurs in the Brahmajāla Sutta, e. g., *Nachcha-gīta-vāditta, mālā gandha-vilepana, Tulā-Māna* (weights and measures), *Kaṁsa* (utensils), cloth of broad borders (*Dīgha-dasa vattha*), mirrors (*Ādāsa*), silken cloth (*Koseyya*), cotton (*Tūlika*), special cloths called *paṭṭika, Chittaka, Goṇaka, Paṭalika, Udda-lomi, Hathattharaṇa* (elephant cover), *Assattharaṇa* (horse trapping), *Ratththaraṇa* (chariot upholstery), *Vattha-lakkhaṇa* (description of cloth), *Maṇi-lakhkhaṇa* (of gems), *Asi-lakhkhaṇa* (of swords), *Usu-lakhkhaṇa* (of arrow), *Dhanu-lakhkhaṇa* (of bow), *Āyudha-lakhkhaṇa*, and special sciences as *Vatthu-vijjā* (*Vāstu-vidyā*, architecture), *Khetta-vijjā* (mensuration or measuring fields), *Vatthu-kamma* (*Vāstu-karma*, practical art of building), *Vatthu-parikamma* (*Vāstu-parikarma*, painting and decorating of buildings).

In a description of the palace of the Chakravartī king Mahā-Sudassana, some details of palace architecture are found. Its height was equal to three *purusha* measures, it had bricks of four kinds, pillars 84000 in number, wooden planks of four colours, staircases, cross-bars, copings, rooms (*Kūṭāgāra*), with beds of gold, silver, ivory and crystal ; doors (*Dvāra*) with palm trees on two sides, a double railing round the palace, a net-work of jingling bells and several ponds of lotus flowers (*Pokkharaṇī*) provided with staircases and platforms (Mahā-Sudassana Sutta, *Dīgha Nikāya*).

There is another reference to the lay-out of Pāṭaliputra called a commercial centre (*Pāṭaligāme Nagaraṁ māpenti Pāṭaliputraṁ puṭabhedanam*, Mahāparinivāṇa Sutta, *Dīgha Nikāya*).

PILLARS—The Śatapatha states that the Gṛihapatis residing in *Kāmyaka Vana* were using *Ayasthūṇa* pillars which seems to be a reference to wooden pillars covered with beaten sheet of copper (ŚB. 11.4.2.17). The lofty wooden pillar was the most outstanding feature of construction. It was reproduced in the big stone pillars

of Aśoka and the front pillars of Chaitya-halls in Western India. The big vaulted roofs with massive wooden ribs indicate the size of the pillars which supported them. A Jātaka story tells of a village of carpenters loading their manufactured articles on boats in the Gaṅgā and sailing upstream to market them. Pāṇini actually refers in a Gaṇa (V. 1. 51) to merchants who were transporting their loads of wooden pillars (*Sthūṇā-bhāra*) and hence known as *Sthauṇa-bhārika*, and also stone goods called *aśma-bhāra*. That the spoken language required such a term is in itself proof of this specialised industry.

A Jātaka gives a vivid account of the building of a city on the banks of the Gaṅgā.[1] The Mahā-Ummagga of this Jātaka was not a tunnel at all, as is often taken, but a palace built as part of the king's fortified city on the bank of the Gaṅgā. Its master architect is mentioned as *Mahā Vaddhaki* an expert in wooden construction. We also read of *Vaththu vidyāchāryā* who dealt with such masterly plans.

The Mahā-Ummaga palace was so named as it was located away from the common road which then was leading towards the Gaṅgā, and this is borne out by the present site of the Kumrahar palace.

It had big dimensions worthy of a royal palace. When sufficient earth had been brought from the Gaṅgā, it was rammed under the feet of elephants wearing leather covers and on that ramp was raised a rampart (पतितपतितच्च उदकेन सन्नीत्वा पाकारं चिनन्ति). There were gateways in the palace wall, one of which looked on to the city-side. The *Prākāra* was 27 feet or 18 cubits in height and so also the gateway fitted with mechanical contrivance to shut the big door leaves (*Yantra-yukta dvāra*) by pressing a peg (*Anī*) which seems to have been the same as the *Indra-kīla* of other descriptions. On either side the walls were built of bricks (*Iṭṭhakāhi chinitvā*), and coated with lime plaster (*Sudhā-kamma*). The rooms were roofed over (*Maṭṭhakka*) with planks (*paḍarachchhanna*) and the ceiling was covered with a special kind of plastering clay called *Ulloka-mattikā* of which several thin coats were applied (*lepetvā*), the last one of shining white colour (*Seta-kamma*). This special white clay was the same as *Navanīta Mattikā* mentioned in the Mahā-vaṁsa. The Chitrasūtra calls it *Mashaka* on account of its butter-like consistency, a technique for preparing the ground on the walls for painting.

1. यथा परिच्छिन्नके स्थाने नगरं मापेतुं आरभि नगर करणं विचारेन्तु एतक इदं करोन्तु ति सर्वं कम्मानि विभजत उम्मगे कम्मं पटिथापेसु महा उम्मगद्वारं गंगातित्थे अहोसि, J., VI, p. 431.

The account makes special mention of 80 big gateways (*Mahā-dvāra*) and 60 small gateways (*Chulla-dvāra*) in the city-wall of the palace which were all operated by mechanical devices, a special pin or peg pressed for closing and another for opening them. In the long corridor of the palace were on both sides one hundred niches for lamps made in the wall and they were also closed and opened by mechanical shutters (*Yanta-yuttā*). A big palace like this was naturally provided with hundreds of rooms (*Eka-śata śayanā-gabbhā*). The word *Gabbha* was the same as *Śālā*, and denoted a room in the palace. In each room was laid a great couch, (*Mahā-śayanam*) with a white parasol (*Seta chhatta*), with a throne placed near the couch. Female statues made of plaster (*Mātu-gāma potthaka-rūpaka*) were made beautiful (*Uttamarūpa-dharā*) true to life that without touching them no one could know that they were not real living women (*hathena anamasitvā na manussa-rūpakam ti na sakkā ñātum*). Moreover in the principal hall of the Mahā-Ummaga palace (*Mahā Ummagasya gabbhe*) expert painters (*Kusala chitakārā*) made many kinds of paintings (*nānappakāra chitā-kammam kariṁsu*).

An interesting list of motifs painted on the walls of the Great Hall is given[1]; for example,

1. SAKKA-VILĀSA—Scenes of Indra's enjoying dance and music with his heavenly nymphs in *Sudharmā* Assembly Hall, some of which are illustrated on the panels at Bharhut and Sānchī.

2. SINERU-PARIBHAṆḌA—The beautiful designs on the vertical faces of the terraces round the mountain Sumeru.

3. SĀGARA-MAHĀ-SĀGARA—Small and big ponds with lotus and other flowers and number of watery birds and aquatic animals.

4. CHATU-MAHĀDVĪPA—The four continents which faced the four cardinal points of Sumeru, as given in the Jaina *Jīvābhigama Sūtra*.

5. HIMAVANTA—The great Himālaya mountain shown with its Kailāsa peak and specially Lake *Mānasarovara* or *Anavatapta* with the four great rivers flowing in the four directions.

6. ANOTATA—This was the same as *Mānasarovara*, the ideal holy lake described by the Jaina, Buddhist and Brāhmanical literature, the holy lake of Brahmā (*Brāhmasara*). The *Saptarshis*, gods and other divine beings take their bath in the Anotatta in which Buddha also is said to have taken his bath.

1. सकविलास-सिनेरुपरिभण्ड-सागरमहासागर-चतुमहादीप-हिमवन्त-अनोतत्त-मनोसिलातल-चन्दसूरिय-चातुम्महाराजिकादि-छकामसग्गा-दिविभत्तियो, Mahā-Ummagga J. VI, 432.

7. MANO-SILĀTALA—The great throne made of red coloured stone (*Manaḥ-śilā*) which was placed near a pond or in the main Assembly Hall or in the palace for the king to sit and rest.

8. CHANDA-SŪRIYA—The motif of the Moon and the Sun, which were drawn as gods in human form or in natural form, was an ancient motif which has continued to be shown in sculpture and also in painting up to our own times.

9. CHĀTUM-MAHĀRĀJIKA—The four *Mahārājika* Gods with their courtly attendants, viz. Vaiśravaṇa king of Yakshas in the north, Dhṛitarāshṭra king of the Gandharvas in the east, Virūḍhaka king of the Kumbhāṇḍas in the south, Virūpāksha king of the Nāgas in the West.

10. CHHA-KĀMA-SAGGA—i. e. the six heavens of sensuous pleasures, being popularly conceived as the place of happiness and long life, same as *Kāmāvachara Deva-loka*.

These ten motifs are named in this Jātaka as of divine character (*Divi-bhattiyo*). There was constructed round the city a watery moat (*Udaka-parikhā*), a city-wall 18 cubits high (*Aṭṭhārasa-hattho pākāro*)—the traditional height of a fort-wall to this day—, which was pierced by city-gates and towers (*Gopurāṭṭālako*). In its centre were built the royal palace with a contingent of other buildings (*Rāja-nivesanādīni*), other residential buildings (*Nivesanādīni*), elephant stables (*Haththi sālādayo*) and many ponds (*Pukkharāṇiyo*). After its completion the city was called, *Mahā-Ummaggo nagaram*, since the site selected for it was out of the way of the frequented path (*Janaummaggo*). This was built by 300 carpenters (*Tini-vaḍḍhakisatāni*) with 300 boats to transport the material and took four months to complete. It was an excellent palace (*Pāsādavara*) built on the banks of the Gaṅgā (*Gaṅgā-tīram*).

In the above description we have all the elements of an ancient Indian palace. It seems to be divided in three courts. The first one along the Gaṅgā contained the real *Rājakula* or palace in which hundreds of well decorated rooms were made. The reference to caryatid female figures carved on the pillars of the rooms is interesting for so early a date. It is also worth noting that before the introduction of stone for railing pillars, wooden railing pillars were undoubtedly used and the custom of decorating them with carved standing female figures was an essential element of palace architecture.

In the second court was the main Assembly Hall. It is here referred to as *Gabbha*, i. e. *Garbha* or the Hall which cannot be anything else but the Royal Audience hall. The walls of this hall were decorated with a number of painted motifs. The

floor was highly polished and in the ceiling above rosettes or full-blown lotuses were carved in relief in the lustrous plaster of the roof (*Upari ulloka-padumāni dassesum*). Another important feature was the use of pendants made of fragrant flowery garlands (*Puppha-dāma*) and also of perfumed cloth twisted into required shape (*Gandha-dāma*, same as *Paṭṭa-dāma* of later literature).

In the first court which must have been quite wide and big in size was located the *Hatthi-sālā* or elephant stable, and probably horse stable (*assa-sālā*) also. In the forecourt infront of the palace were constructed shops or the market (*Nānā ppakāre āpaṇe ti dassyiṁsu* (Mahā-Ummagga Jātaka, Vol. VI, p. 431-33).

The Jātakas also describe several other Vimānas or palaces like the *Rativaddhana-Pāsāda, Upphaka-Pāsāda,* and also in the Nimi Jātaka a series of Vimānas or places furnished with *Stambha, Kūṭāgāras, Kiṅkhiṇī jāla, Dhvaja, Udyāna, Pokkhariṇī, Dvārakoṭṭha,* etc. (*Jātaka VI. 117*, Nimi Jātaka). The Suddharmā Assembly Hall is said to be well built (*Sunimita*) on beautifully fashioned eight-sided pillars (*Aṭṭhaṁsā Sukaṭā Khambhā*) and furnished with *Dvārakoṭṭhakas* of beautiful tower (*Chittakūṭa Dvāra Koṭṭhaka*).

The Pāli literature, as shown above, is rich in architectural descriptions of palaces, cities and city-gates. As shown by Dr. Coomaraswamy a palace was known as *Pāsāda, Nivāsa, Rāja-Bhavana, Rāja-Geha, Rājanivesana, Vāsaghara, Antepura* and *Vimāna*. The ideal for it was the palace of the Gods (*Divya Vimāna*). The king's palace faced on to the central city-square, as in the case of the *Ummagga* Palace. A separate palace was provided for the Crown-Prince (*Yuvarājaṭṭhe*) ; it was spoken of as *Upaṭṭhāna* and sited in a portion of the king's palace, an arrangement which we find also in the case of Harsha's palace as Yuvarāja. The royal residence was *Antepura* in which there were quarters for the queens, princesses and other ladies, collectively called *Antepurikā*. It was properly guarded (*Ārakkhatham*).

The palace was surrounded by an outer wall (*Pākāra*), having a main gate or perhaps four gates. The outer gate house (*Bahir dvāra Koṭṭhaka*) lay at some distance from the actual palace and sometimes the guests were received at the outer gate. In later literature this was also known as *Bahirdvāraśālā* or *Alinda*, beautified with paintings and designs as we read in the *Divyāvadāna* about a *Dvāra-Koshṭhaka* painted with *Bhava-chakra.*

Passing through the outer door one entered tho royal courtyard which often formed the outermost of a series of courts, known as *Aṅgaṇa* or *Prakoshṭha* or *Kakshyā*. The first pretentious building after crossing the large court was the King's Judgment Hall (*Vinichchāyatana*), known later as the *Āsthāna-Maṇḍapa.*

The *Prāsāda* was built on a solid foundation or basement (*Vatthu*). In this connection some architectural elements are to be noted, e.g. a pillar (*Stambha*), *Tulā* (the transverse lintel on the doorway supporting the entablature, also called *Bhāra-tulā*), *Saṅghāṭa* (capitals of pillars with pairs of animals and human beings as *Haya-Saṅghāṭa, Gaja-Saṅghāṭa, Nāra-Saṅghāṭa* etc.), *Bhitti-pāda* (dado ; now called *Ijārā*), *Kūṭa* (ridged roof with finials or *thūpikā*), *Gopānasī* rafters, literally bull's nose, a *Chaitya*-window-like motif on the outside of the walls where rafters were placed), *Pakkha-passa* (bondings of the walls), and *Mukhāvaṭi* (facade or freeze on the front side, Skt. *Mukhapaṭṭikā*). The pillars formed an important element of the house or palace. A thousand and a hundred pillars of the Vedas correspond to the *Sahassa-thambha* (J. 5. 169, VI 173) or *Bahut-thambhaka* (J. IV 153).

The palace had one or more, often several, storeys (*Bhūmika*, or *Tala*) and therefore described as *Ekabhūmika, Dvibhūmika, Tribhūmika*, upto *Navabhūmika*, i. e. one to nine storeys. A building of three storeys was more usual and the same became the norm for the pyramidal superstructure of the *Śikhara* in temples.

The main floor was known as *Mahātala* (J. 1. 62), also the best floor *Varatala* (J. 1. 60). The first floor was *Uparitala* and the top-floor or the uppermost floor was known as *Ākāśatala*. We have a set of three terms viz. *Āditala* (ground-floor), *Ardhatala* (mezzanine floor), and *Trita-tala* third floor . The lowest storey of a palace is called the *Heṭṭimtala*. On each storey rooms with rising top having finials were known as *Kūṭāgāra*. When furnished with latticed windows they were known as *Sīha-pañjara*. *Harmya* was a room in the upper storey for women.

The main features of the lay-out of the palace was its division into courts of which there were usually three in the early stages The first court had a *dvāra-koṭṭha* and then open grounds with provision for stables (*Aśvasthāna maṇḍapa*) for horses and elephants and also rooms for soldiers In the second court on the ground floor of the palace the main feature was the great pillared hall, similar to the big *maṇḍapa* supported on pillars in the *Chaitya*-halls in Western India. This was used as the hall of public audience (*Darbar-i-Ām*, or *Bahirāstāna-maṇḍapa*) of the King. It was reached by a grand staircase (*Mahāsopāna* J. VI. 428). The royal palace was comprised of two distinct parts, the ground floor (*Heṭṭhapāsāda*) and the upper floor (*Uparipāsāda*), the latter being the main residential portion for members of the royalty. The same arrangement has practically come down to our own days. On the ground floor were located the palace garden (*Gṛihodyāna*), kitchen (*Mahānasa, Āhāramaṇḍapa*), bath-rooms with fountains of flowing water (*Jantā-ghara*), wells (*Ud-pāna*), step-wells, lotus ponds (*Pokharinī*), temple (*Devaghara*) etc. The floor is described as *Kuṭṭima* which was either made of bricks, stone or plastered with lime. The Jātaka texts

always refer to going up into or coming down from a palace which implies the use of stair-ways (J. I. 61.). The foot of the stair-case was known as *Sopāna-pādamūla* (J III. 216) and the head of the stair-case *Sopānamatthaka* (J III. 15), or *Sopana-sīsa* (J. IV, 26). The wooden planks of the stairs were known as *Sopānakaṭiṅgara* Sometimes there were three stairways, provided with short balustrade (*Vedikā*) having upright posts (*Khambha*), cross-bars (*Sūchi*) and coping (*Ushṇīsha*) similar to the big railings round the stūpa.

The king's own chamber was known as *Siri-gabbha* (J. IV 105; Skt. *Śrī-garbha*) and the royal couch as *Siri-sayana* (J. III. 264). The prefix *Śrī* denoted the articles for the personal use of the king and was used later also, e.g the king's pavilion *Śrī-vitāna* by Kālidāsa (*Vikramorvaśīya*) and the royal she-elephant *Śrī-kareṇu* by Baṇa in the *Harshacharita*.

KŪṬĀGĀRA—The term *Kūṭāgāra, Kūṭāgāraśāla*, denoted a building with a peaked top, usually a roofed pavilion with a gabled end and vaulted roof with small *stūpīs* over it. Thus we read about the roof-ridge (*Prāsāda-kūṭa*) of a palace with sixty water-pot finials (*Udakaghaṭa*), and a *Vimāna* with many *Kūṭāgāras* (J. VI. 120), also *Majjhima N.* I. 2 3 speaking of seven hundred *Kūṭāgāras* on each *Niyyūha* or projecting ledge of a *Prāsāda*. Sometimes each storey of the palace consisted of a number of such rooms A *Kūṭāgāra* was thus a chamber shade also called *Gabbha, Śalā, Guhā*, often it was provided with a latticed window or screen (*Sīhapañjara*), and a ventilator (*Vātapāna*). The *Kūṭāgāra* room could be closed from inside by drawing across the doorleaves a transverse bar (*phusitaggala*, Hindi *argalā*), and also from outside by locking (*Yantaka*). The *Kūṭāgāra* on the top floor was *Hammiya* (Skt. *Harmya*; cf. *Harmikā* on the top of the *Stūpa*).

ROOF—The roof of the *Kūṭāgāra* was either domed or barrel-vaulted having a middle ridge. It was built on rafters (*Gopānasīyo*) which in the case of the domed roof closed upwards and met in the circular roof-plate (*Kaṇṇikā*), which was the actual *kūṭa* or pinnancle of the dome. Such a roof resembling in shape a melon (खरबुजिया छत) or bubble (बुद्बुदाकार) is seen in the circular *Bodhigharas* at Bharhut, and also in the round roof at the Sudāmā Cave. The other form of the roof was barrel-vaulted (*Gaja-pṛishṭākṛiti*) as in Chaitya-halls. They were also of two kinds, viz. the rafters running transversely and placed parallel to the middle ridge. The ends of the beams are visible in the horse-shoe, or the ogee arches, as in the Lomasa Rishi cave This was the style derived from ancient sacrificial sheds The second variety of vaulted roof was supported on massive curved ribbings similar to th surviving timber beams in the Karle Cave.

The distinction between these three forms of ancient roofing is visible in the ancient Indian palaces and Bodhi-gharas in the Barabar Hills, at Karle, Kanheri Amarāvatī and Mathurā. As time passed the flat roof on pillars and corbels came into vogue and it became possible to accommodate on the top many open pillared pavilions like *Chandra-Śālā*, about which Bāṇa and Kālidāsa write so often.

In the making of the second kind of roof supported on straight transverse rafters which may be identified with the *Gopānasī* style as in the Lomasa Ṛishi cave massive pillars on the two ends of the hall were required (*Sthūṇā-Rāja*, Śāṅkhāyana Gṛihya Sūtra 3. 3. 7) ; one of them which was the biggest was called *Varshishṭha Sthūṇā-rāja* (ŚB. 3 5. 1. 1.). The top-covers or inverted jars placed in a line on the ridge to protect the outlets for smoke (*Dhūmanetta*) were called *Stūpī*. Tha actual roof (*Chhādana*) was made of bamboos, rafters of wood and covered with a net-work of bamboos (*Vāna-laṭṭhi*) with layers of bamboo-strips, reed-mattings and bundles of grass (*Tṛiṇa*), straw from wheat and barley (*Palada* or *Palāla*, Hindi *Payār*) and also leaves (*Paṇṇa*), and sometimes with tiles (*Giñjaka*).

A roof-apartment (*Sīha-pañjara*, Lion-cage) is clear in some of the sculptures, for example, the one on Bodha-gaya railing (Fig. 55, Indian Palaces, Coomaraswamy). The word *Pañjara* should be taken in its natural sense of a cage for pet animals closed on four sides with lattice work. This corresponds to the subsequent *Gavāksha* window (Hindi *Jharokhā*) in which men and women took their seat to have a look at the world outside. In medieval architecture these were called *Ambāri* (oriel or bay-windows) or ledges with intricate *Jālī* work.

The various illustrations in sculpture show that the palace apartment on the upper floor was in most cases set back from the parapet enclosed by a small *Vedikā* or railing so that between the room proper and the projecting *Vedikā* an exterior terrace, deck or balcony was available for open-air sitting, or as covered porch or verandah, sometimes provided with screens or movable curtains (*Saṁsaraṇa-kiṭika*, and *Udghāṭana-kiṭika*, Chulla 6. 3. 5).

The *Siṁha-Pañjara*, *Gavāksha* and *Vātapāna* were of three kinds, viz. *Śalākā-vātapāna*, *Jāla-vātapāna* and *Vedikā-vātapāna*, i. e. different kinds of windows used for light and air which could be thrown open and closed at will. Sometimes they were provided with leaves (*Kavāṭa* J. 2. 274), or blinds or curtains which could be rolled up (*Chakkalikā* or *Bhisi*, Chulla 6. 2. 2). A window or opening too high to look out of it was known as *Uddha-chhiddaka-vātapāna*.

The material for building palaces, *Chaitya*-halls, *Bodhi-gharas*, etc. seems to have been mainly timber, used for pillars, rafters, roofing, windows, stairs and lattice-

work as also walls. Bricks seem to have been used rarely and stone was still rarer for pillar basements (*Kumbhaka*).

The above picture of a royal palace with its horizontal and elevational lay-out furnishes evidence of the development of architecture (*Vāstu-vidyā*) in the Janapada age. The Pāli literature has preserved a record of the traditional forms as current in memory and folk-lore. Most of these stylistic elements continued in the Mauryan and Suṅga periods with transition from timber to stone and brick.

The city-wall (*Prākāra*) was surrounded by a moat (*Parikhā*) crossed by draw-bridges (*Saṅkrama*). The wall was pierced by four main gateways which were lofty structures furnished with towers (*Aṭṭālaka*) on the two sides containing a number of rooms (*Koshṭhaka*) for guards and travellers, thus known as *Dvāra-koshṭhaka*. With the city gateway was sometimes connected the house of public charity (*Sattra* or *Dāna-śālā*) at which king's alms were distributed. The office of the toll-post was also located in a part of the *Dvāra-koshṭhaka*

JAINA ĀGAMA EVIDENCE—The Jaina Āgamika literature being of the same age, the picture of art and architecture presented by it is similar to that of the Pāli literature. The wooden construction was known as *Kaṭṭha-kamma*. An important reference is to a wooden figure of a Ṛishi made for worship by his son. Similarly images of stucco (*pottha*), and ivory (*danta*) are also mentioned.

The most illustrative example of palace architecture occurs in the Rāya-paseniya Sutta in an account of the *Vimāna* of Sūryābha Deva. It was surrounded by a rampart (*Pāgāra*), embellished with merlons (*Kavisīsaga*, Skt. *Kapiśīrshaka*), gates in every direction (*Dvāra*), furnished with *Stūpikās* on the ridge of the roof (*Thūbhiyā*). The whole building was decorated with many kinds of figures and motifs (*Bhatti-chitta*), e g. *Īhāmiga* (faboulous animals), bulls (*Usabha*), horse (*Turaga*) Yaksha or Atlantes figures (*Nara*), crocodile (*Magara*), birds (*Vihaga*), serpents or dragons (*Vālaga*), Kinnara (Centaurs), deer (*Ruru*), *Śarabha* (lion-like figures), Yak (*Chamara*) elephant (*Kuñjara*), wild creepers (*Vanalaya*) and lotus-creepers (*Paumalaya*). The capitals of the pillars were decorated with figures of pairs of Vidyādharas (*Vidyādhara-jamala*), horses (*Haya-saṅghāḍa*), elephants (*Gaya-saṅghāḍa*) and similar numerous decorative figures (रूपकसहस्सकलित). The doors were provided with landing (*Nimma*), pedestals (*Pāiṭṭhāṇa*), pillars (*Khambha*), floor (*Kuṭṭima*), threshold *Eluyā* = देहली), bolts (*Inda-kīla*), lintels (*Uttaraṅga*), door-posts (*Chheḍā* = द्वारशाखा), small door-planks (*Sūchī*), joints or bonds (*Sandhi*), sockets (*Samuggaya* = सूचिकागृह), wooden traverse bars behind door-leaves (*Aggalā*), sockets for door-pins (*Aggalāpāsāya*),

hinges (*Āvattaṇa-peḍhiyā*). For city-gates large heavy doors fitting closely were provided, which were generally closed at night (*Nirantariya-ghaṇa-kavāḍa*), very often having a small door (*Aṇī-dvāra*, or *Uttara-pāsaga*). On their side-walls (*Bhitti*) the doors were fitted with bosses (*Bhitti-guliyā*) for pendant beds steads (*Go-māṇasiyā* = गोमानस्यः शय्याः). Graceful figures of *Śāla-bhañjikā* women (लीलट्ठियसालभंजिय) and figures of fabulous animals (*Vyāla-rūpaka*) were carved on the doors.

The number of railing women would be 32 on each side or 108 in all. There are some other interesting architectural terms, e.g *Kūḍḍā* (walls of *Gavāksha* patterns), large posts (*Vaṁsaga*), transverse beams (*Paḍivaṁsaga*), upright smaller posts fixed in the ground (*Bhomā*), elevation (*Ussecha*), tops (*Ulloya*), lattices (*jāla-pañjara*), side-walls (*Pakkhā*), bamboos for side walls (*Pakhkha-bāhā*), cross-beams (*Vaṁśa*), ribbings (*Vaṁśa-kāvalliya*), panels (*Paṭṭiyā*), screen walls (*Ohāḍaṇī*), and thatched layers above the ribbings (*Uvari-puchchaṇā*), ceiling (*Achchāyaṇa*), peaks (*Kūṭa*), and finials (*Thūbhiyā*) (Rāyapaseniya sutta 97, see J. C. Jain, *Life in Ancient India as depicted in the Jain Canon*, p. 181).

We also find the description of a big theatre hall (*Pekkhā-ghara-maṇḍava*, Skt. *Prekshā-gṛiha maṇḍapa*) which was supported on many columns (*Aneka-stambha-śata sannivishṭa*), and was furnished with a terraced railing (*Vedikā*), gateways with architrave (*Toraṇa*) and *Śālabhañjikā* figures. It was decorated with many other motifs (*Īhāmṛiga* etc.) and ornamental figures (*Ruvaga-sahasra-kalita*). In the centre of the Theatre Hall was a stage (*Akhkhāḍaga*).

In the Nāyādhamma Kahā is a description of the sleeping chamber of a queen which had an outer courtyard, an Assembly Hall polished (*Ghaṭṭa-maṭṭha*) and well set with pillars, endowed with statues (*Sāla-bhañjiyā*), latticed windows, moon-stone at the foot of the stairways (*Ardha-chandra*), projecting ledges (*Nijjūha*), and a room on the roof called *Chanda-sālikā*. Its inside was decorated with paintings (*Chitta-kamma*) ; the floor (*Kuṭṭima-tala*) was studded with semi-precious stones (*maṇi*) and the ceiling had a painted canopy (*ulloyachittiya*) with lotus flowers and creepers (*Paumalayā*). There is reference also to a Summer-House (*Siyahara*) built for a Chakravartī king, which name occurs in the Niśītha-chūrṇi and therefore must be of later times corresponding to the *Hima-gṛiha* in the Kādambarī (para 208 of P. L. Vaidya's edition), of which the architectural layout had already been perfected in the Kushāṇa period.

Thus both palace and town architecture and other allied arts and crafts were developed in the Janapada age. Their actual remains are few because of the frail or perishable nature of the material used, but a prior tradition of Śilpas was established, e.g. architecture, town-planning, royal palaces, residential buildings, roads,

assembly halls (*Saṁthāgāra*), charity halls (*Dāna-śālā*), gateways (*Gopura*), towers (*Aṭṭālaka*), moats (*Parikhā*), draw-bridges (*Saṅkrama*), wood carving (*Kāshṭha-karma*), metal casting, stone-carving, making of wooden pillars, posts and rafters (*Sthūṇā*), capitals and basements (*Kumbhaka*), latticed windows (*Vātapāna* and *Gavāksha*), heavy doors (*Maha-kavāṭa*), clay-figurines, fired bricks, ivory carving, goldsmith's work, plastering, polishing (*Ghaṭṭa-Maṭṭha prabhā*) in order to produce three kinds of bright effect, viz. *Saprabha, Samaricha* and *Sodyota* (Jīvābhigama). The commentators explain *Ghaṭṭa* as preliminary rubbing with rough stone and *Maṭṭha* with fine abrasive powder in which finished smoothness was produced. *Prabhā* is explained as lustre which is in the object, *Marīchi* as the radiant polish reflecting a net-work of rays, and *Udyota* as the highest lusture which being reflected from the surface casts a glow on the objects around. The existence of terms to indicate the bright metaliic polish that we have on the Northern Black Polished Ware and on the Mauryan polished monuments shows that the technique of producing was a well known art. The polish on the Northern Grey Ware which belongs to the Janapada period and also some traces of it on the stone Yaksha statue from Parkham at Mathura takes the art to the pre-Maurya period and possibly earlier. The realistic description of the walls and ceiling of the Assembly Hall of the palace in the Mahā-Ummaga city is a pointer in the same direction.

The art of painting also had been developed and a number of motifs illustrating scenes from heavenly life and mythical beliefs are actually mentioned both in Buddhist and Jaina literature. Indeed the rich *repertoire* of the carved figures on railing pillars, panels and cross-bars as listed in Jaina texts are almost the same as we find on the stone railings and gateways of Bharhut and Sānchī, pointing to pre-existing wooden prototypes.

(b) SYMBOLS ON PUNCHA-MARKED COINS

The Punch-marked coins of silver of which not less than 50,000 have been found all over India from Taxila to Mysore, show over 500 symbols. It appears that when for actual building and statuary the practice was to use timber only, for actual coins beads and ornaments they were freely using gold, silver and semi-precious stones. The silver coins are mostly flat pices of silver cut from strips and reduced to a standard weight by clipping the edges and corners, and finely stamped with a number of symbols or signs on the obverse and reverse sides.

The dating of these coins is fairly known (c. 800-200 B. C.). The Pāli literature refers to them as having been current in the time of King Bimbisāra when Rājagṛiha was the capital in the sixth century B. C. The earliest coins go back to the real Janapada period, when besides Magadha similar coins were issued by the

Kosala Janapada and the Śūrasena Janapada. In that first stage the standard weight of a coin was 20 *māshas* of silver (called *Viṁśatika*) and 30 *māshas* (called *Triṁśatka*). Some of these early coins are cup-shaped, stamped with bold rayed symbols on one side only, dating from c. 8th-7th cent. B. C. According to Pāṇini and the Pāḷi texts these coins were called Kārshāpaṇa, but we do not find this term in the Brāhmaṇa literature and it may be assumed that this coinage was introduced at the close of the Brāhmaṇa period in about 800 B. C.

Pāṇini mentions in many Sūtras several classes of Kārshāpaṇa coins and this is the only coinage known to the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya. This coinage had become well established in a series of 1, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, both in silver and copper.

The second stage in its development was reached in the Nanda period (fifth cent. B. C.) when the weight standard of 32 *rattis* was fixed and a system of five bold obverse symbols with several smaller signs on the reverse was introduced. The intention was to indicate the dynasty, king, locality and the issuing authority. The symbols of this Intermediate period are extremely well done in bold outline and clearly stamped on a somewhat broad flat surface.

The third stage was reached during the Mauryan period when the coins became stumpy pieces cut from thicker sheets of silver or cast as nodules and beaten with hammer into round flattened shape. The symbols are jumbled and overlapping.

A study of these symbols over 500 in number, brings to our view a strange world, believing in the representation or depiction of the beliefs of the people in the form of various symbols or signs. The foremost place is taken by the solar symbol, Sūrya, which is found almost without exception on all the Puncha-marked coins of ancient India. Sūrya is represented as a rayed figure with a circle in the centre having a point or pellet within it. The rays are both thick and thin, straight and curved. The next place is given to a six-armed symbol (*Shaḍara*, Hindi छैरिया) which consists of six spokes crossing at centre, the six arms being tipped by ovals, globes, tridents, taurines, arrow-heads, triangles, balls, heart-shaped signs, dumbles, etc.

The next group belongs to the four great animals (*Mahā-Ājāneya Paśu*) which were held sacred much anterior to Buddhism and of which the earliest traces are found in the Indus Valley and the Ṛigveda. They include the bull, elephant, lion, and horse rarely. Another symbol is that of a crescent-topped mount which is associated with the Mauryan dynasty. Amongst other interesting signs are the wheel, tree in railing with and without birds, tank with fish, hare, peacock, frog, tortoise bow and arrow, combinations of taurines, squares with a *Svastika* inside, intersecting triangles, caduceus, *Chakradhvaja* (*Chakra*-topped standard in railing), elongated

dice-pieces (*Śalākā*), triskeles (*Triphaṇa*), flowers, beetles, Pañjaka (hand-impression in a square), and a group of three human figuring of whom two are male and one female. An interesting symbol is the triangle-headed standard of which there are several variants, but it appears to have been an ancient symbol having a link with the Indradhvaja or Vaijayantī standard sacred to Indra. If we look before and after the symbols on Punch-marked coins are tell-tale, furnishing links with the preceding ages when the Vedic people left behind a trail of animal and geometrical figurines as part of their religious symbolism to which we have drawn attention earlier (ante pp. 45-47). On the other hand the corpus of Punch-marked symbols is transmitted to succeeding generations and the cue is taken up by the tribal coins and sealings (c. 2nd century B.C.—2nd century A.D.). No doubt is left that the people and the authorities who were issuing the seals and the coins were saturated with a belief in the sacred meaning of these numerous symbols. The broad area from Taxila to Ujjain and from Nagari near Chittor to Bihar comes before our eyes as concentrating on the continuity of these symbols. In the Tribal period besides the earlier signs some new ones were added, e. g. *Svastika* and a pair of *Nāgas* (*Nāga-mudrā*) as well as four balls round the four arms of a *Svastika*, sometimes having shorter *Svastika* signs within them. The story of the signs and symbols as gathered from coins, sealings, pottery and beads manufactured during this long period of about 800 years is a commentary on the visual representation and meaning of Indian art.

(*c*). ART OF INDIA AND JAMBŪDVĪPA

GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF JAMBŪDVĪPA : Indion art did not exist in isolation but as part of a wider cultural context named after Jambūdvīpa which is the name in the Purāṇas for the vast area from China to the Caspian sea and from India to Siberia. In earlier geography of the four continents (*Chaturdvīpī-Bhūgola*) the earth was conceived in the form of a four-petalled lotus (*Chaturdala-Bhūpadma*), with Meru mountain in the centre as pericarp, and with *Bhadrāśva* in the east, *Bhārata* in the south, *Ketumāla* in the west and *Uttarakuru* in the north. Later on this geographical conception gave place to that of seven continents, in which the whole of Asia became Jambūdvīpa. In this chapter Jambūdvīpa is used in this particular sense to conceive of the art and culture which spread over this wide teritorry.

Bhadrāśva literally means the Auspicious Horse, i. e. the White Winged Dragon, held sacred in Chinese art and religion, and therefore it had become the ancient Sanskrit name of China. *Bhārata* to the south was also known as *Haimavata-Varsha*. *Ketumāla* to the west was the area from the Pamirs to the Caspian or even further up to Western Asia. This was the land of the Oxus (*Vakshu* or *Chakshu*), the Scythians and Iranians and of Ahuramazda ; the name *Ketumāla*, Wreath of

Banners, probably refers to the Farr or Divine Glory called *Dhvajavatī Kanyā* or the Winged Maiden of the Sun-god stationed in the sky.[1] *Uttarakuru* was the land north of Pamir extending up to Siberia, in the eastern part of which was *Chandradvīpa*, the original home-land of the Śakas.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND : The above geographical statement shows that India was at the centre of a wheel with peripherical expansions in which her culture and inter-continental commerce were countable factors. In this picture *Paipilika* gold from Siberian river-washings was coming to India by trade-routes across the Pamir, Chinese silk and Central Asian jade came into the hands of Indian marchants, and traders from India reached Babylon with their peacocks and Egypt and Western Asia with their cotton and teak.

The story of India's relations w'th Western Asia goes back to the Indus Valley as we have pointed out above. The discovery of Indus Valley seals in testified strata of the Sargonic period (C. 2350 B. C.) supplies, in the words of Hrozny, "a strong evidence of a lively commercial intercourse between India and Near East". The next definite proof is the presence of Āryan names amongst the Kassite rulers of Babylonia (c. 1746 to 1180 B. C.) and of the Vedic deities *Indra, Mitra, Varnṇa*, and *Nāsatya* amongst the Mitanni people at Boghaz-koi in Cappadocia (about 1400 B. C.). Equally significant is the discovery at Boghaz-koi of a text on horse-breeding by Ki-kku-li, a Mitannian author, which contain numerous Sanskrit words as *Ekāvartana, Dvyaāvartana, Tryāvartana*, etc.

EARLY ART FORMS : These facts have left a definite impression on art forms which come from Western Asia and India as the common heritage of a culture in which both the east and the west made their contribution. To this broad canvas of early Indian art forms, we have given the name of Jambūdvīpa art which according to the ancient Indian evidence extended from *Bhadrāśva* or China to *Ketumāla* or Iran and Mesopotamia. For example, we find in Indian literature, references to winged lion (*Siṁāḥ Pakshagamāḥ*, Vālmīki, Kishkindhā, 42,16), two-headed eagle (*Ubhayatāḥ Śīrshṇī Aditi-Suparṇī*, ŚB. 3. 2. 4. 16), of which the two heads face east ((*Suprāchī*) and west (*Supratīchī*, same as *Dvimūrdhā-Śakuni*, Matsya 6. 1. 17), winged bison (*Pakshī Mahisha* and *Suparṇa Mahisha*, AV. 13. 2.32-33), two-headed bull (*Chatuḥ śṛiṅga dviśīrshā Vṛishabha*, ṚV. 4. 58. 3), four-horned or two-headed 'bison (*Chatuḥ-śṛiṅga Gaura*, ṚV. 4. 58. 2), ten calves with a single head (*Eka-śīrshāṇaḥ Daśa-Vatsāḥ*, AV. 13. 4.6), and a number of other animal-faced (*Mṛiga-rūpa*), bird-faced (*Aṇḍaja-rūpa*), fabulous (*Īhāmṛiga*), mythical, chimerical and grotesque forms (*Vikaṭa-rūpa*) with

1. अत्र ध्वजवती नाम कुमारी हरिमेधसः । आकाशे तिष्ठ तिष्ठेति तस्थौ सूर्यस्य शासनात् ॥
(Mahābhārata, 5. 108. 13).

one or more heads (*Bahu-mukha, Bahu-śīrsha, Aneka-vaktraka*). This was the background of Jambādvīpa art in which many common elements from early Indian and Western Asiatic art can be recognised. We may study their parallels in Sumerian, Hittite, Assyrian, Mesopotamian, Cretan, Trojan, Lycean, Phoenician, Achaemenian and Scythian cultures.

Early Indian art invented a number of fanciful figures as *Simha-vyāla, Gaja-vyāla, Aśva-vyāla, Nara-vyāla, Vṛisha-vyāla, Mesha-vyāla, Śuka-vyāla, Mahisha-vyāla*, etc, in which a particular head was joined to a different body. Later *Śilpa* texts give their number as sixteen each represented in sixteen poses, giving an aggregate of 256 forms (Aparājita-Pṛichchhā, 233. 4-6, *Iti shoḍasha vyālāni uktāni mukhabhedataḥ*). Their variety and poses, once formulated were subject to elaboratiou by ingenious sculptors, ivory-carvers, etc. as in the art of Begram plaques. The meaning of these motifs in Indian literature is that they are so many attendants (*Gaṇa-Pramatha*) of one *Rudra*. Each individual although born as a human being carries in his face the physiognomy of a bird or an animal, the different forms being called *Īhā-mṛiga*, animals of fancy or fabulous creatures. The germs of the idea are met with in the Ṛigveda (VII. 104. 22) where the mythical forms are called *Yātu* and six illustrative [illegible] are given. For example, owl (*Ulūka-yātu*), owlet (*Śuśulūka-yātu*), dog (*Śva yātu*), cuckoo (*Koka-yātu*), eagle (*Suparṇa-yātu*) and vulture (*Gṛidhra-yātu*). These are associated in Ṛigveda with Indra, as the Purāṇic Gaṇas with *Rudra* and they are called *Asuras* (Brahma Purāṇa, 213. 93, 99), *Dānavas* (Matsya, 163. 1-4 ; Harivaṁśa 3. 45) also *Niśāchara-Gaṇa*.

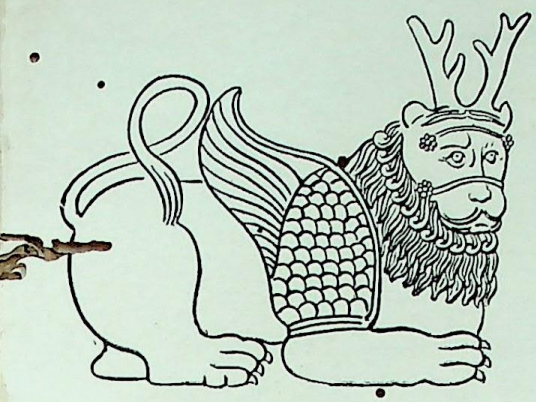
Some of these motifs are as follows :—

1. Winged Lions (*Sapaksha-Simha*)—The earliest reference in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa places them on the Somagiri mountain, on the junction of the Indus with the sea (*Sindhu-Sāgara Saṅgama*) which marks the end of the western direction. Probably the author was writing against the background of the traditional art-motifs of Iran and Mesopotamia where such lions were depicted in colossal size and of which stories were brought by mariners and traders. At Sānchī we have figures of winged lions on the western gateway and also we find them at Mathura and Amarāvatī with turbaned human faces, with beards and wings [Fig. 24].

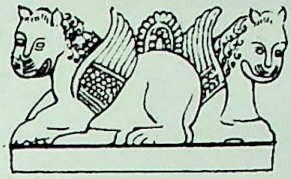
2. Griffin, an imaginary animal with the body of a lion and the curved beak and wings of an eagle (*Śyena-vyāla*) [Fig. 25].

3. Tritons, a marine demigod with the upper half of a human being joined to the lower half of a fish or an ophidian creature, which are popular at Mathura. These seem to be the *Mahoraga* motif of Indian literary texts. [Fig. 26].

4. Centaurs, *Kinnara* of Sanskrit literature with a horse's head joined to a human body (*Aśva-mukha*), or a human bust joined to a horse's body (*Purusha-vigraha*), both forms being popular in Indian art and literature. [Fig. 27].



a



b

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Fig. 24

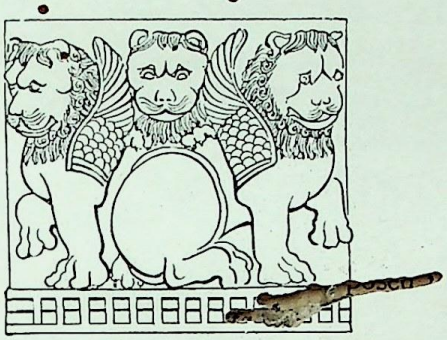

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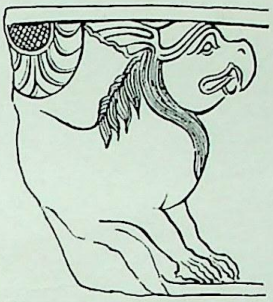
Fig. 24



a

Fig. 25

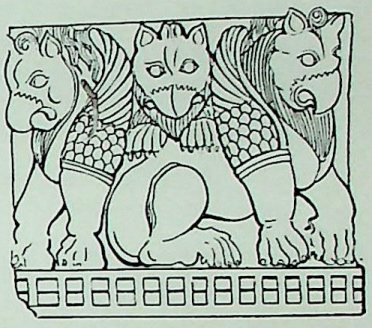


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Fig. 25

a

b

Fig. 26

c

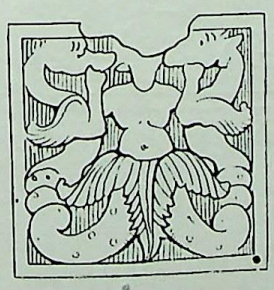

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Fig. 26

a

Fig. 27

b

Fig. 27

PLATE X.

Fig. 28 a

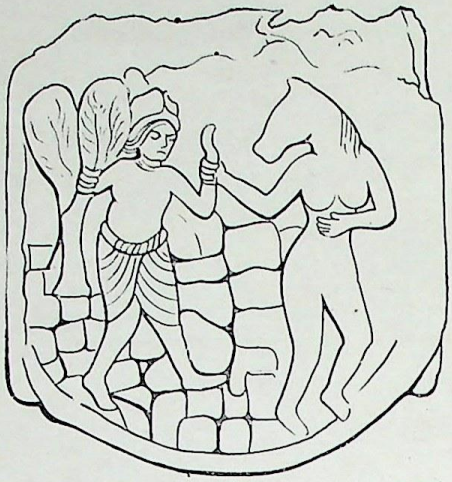


Fig. 27 c

Fig. 28 c

Fig. 28 b

Fig. 27 d

Fig. 28 d

a

c

b

Fig. 29

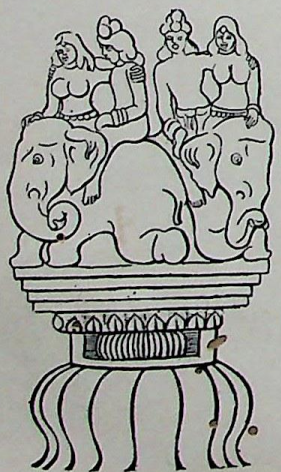


Fig. 31

Fig. 30

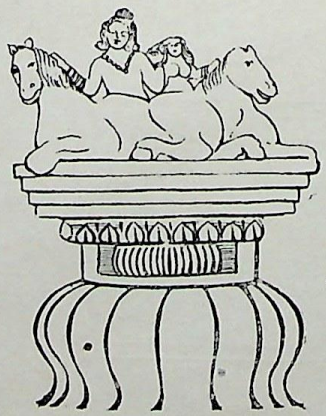
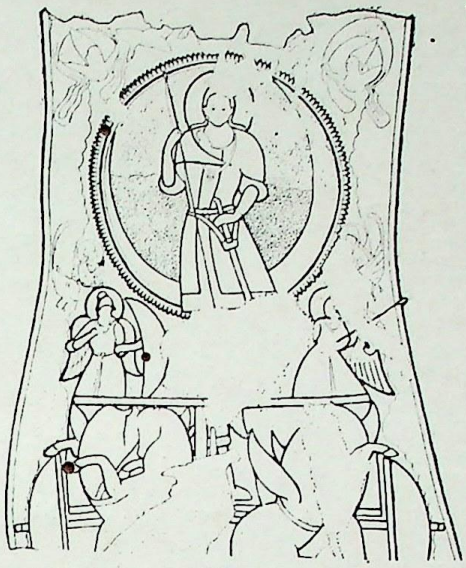


Fig. 32



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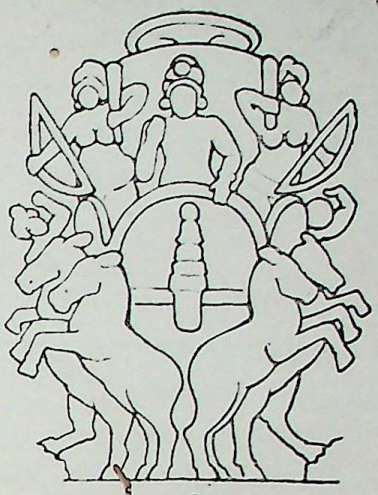

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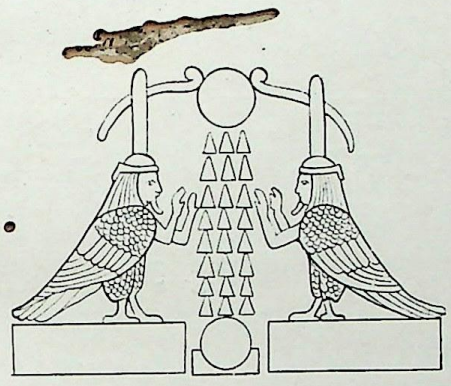
Fig. 33



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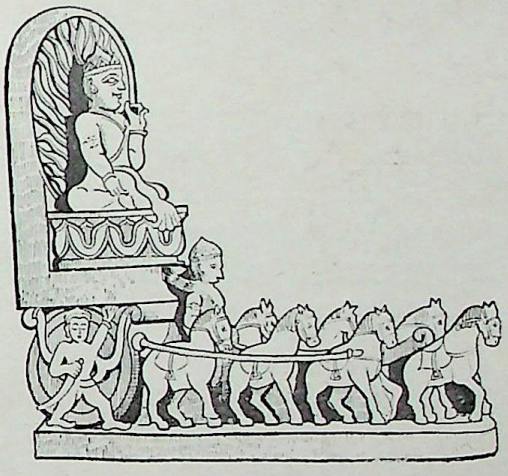
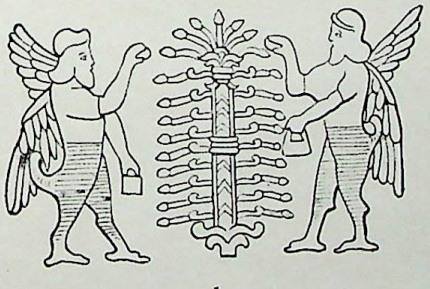


Fig. 33 c



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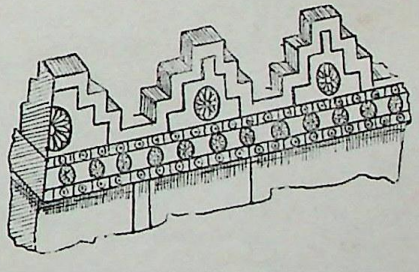

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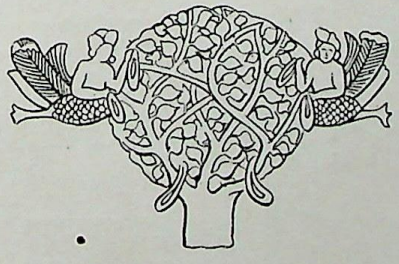

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Fig. 35

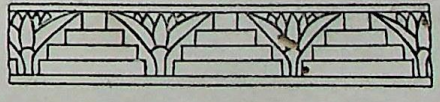

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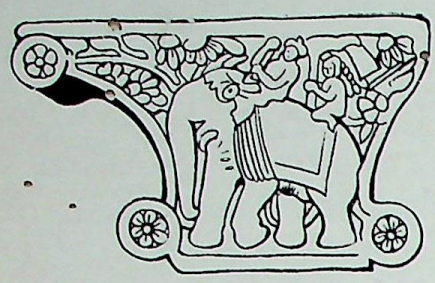
Fig. 34

PLATE XII



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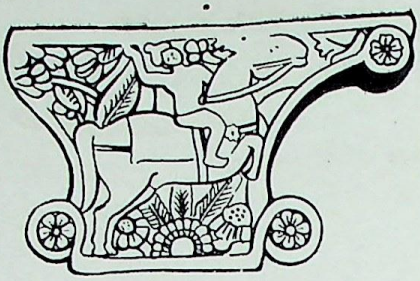

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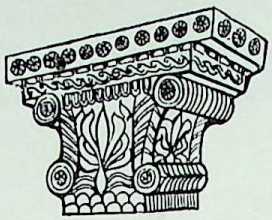

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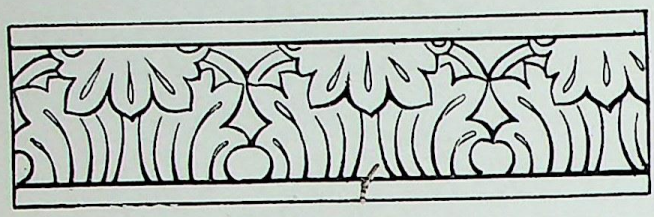

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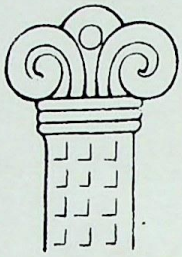

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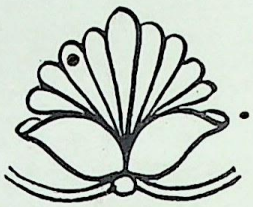

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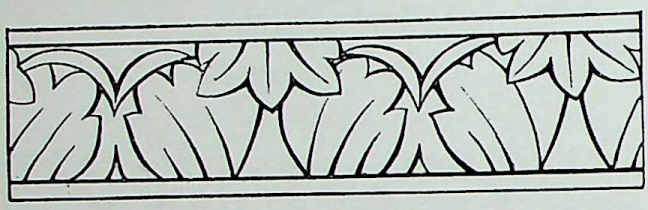

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Fig. 37

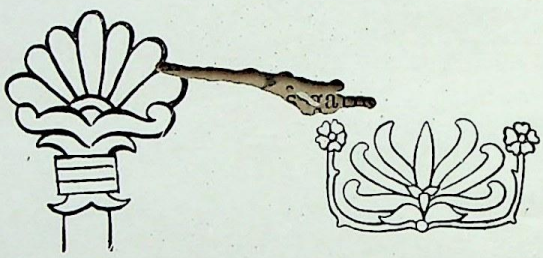

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Fig. 36

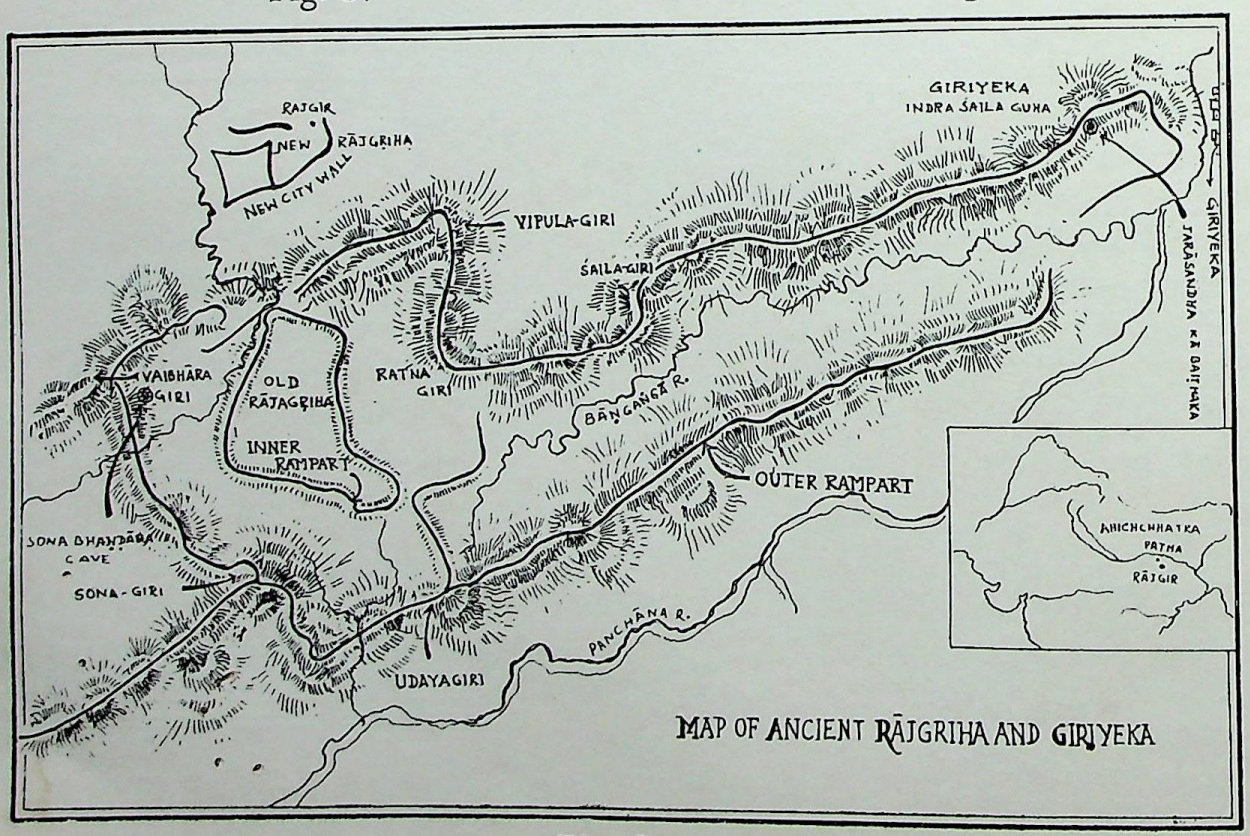


Fig. 38

5. *Suparṇa*, creatures with the body of a bird joined to a human head, corresponding to Harpies of classical art. They are represented at Sanchi, and Mathura (lintel from Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā). [Fig. 28].

6. Double-headed Eagle—It is found at Sirkap, Taxila in India, but Coomaraswamy has mentioned it as a motif of Hittite art and probably earlier. In the great legend of *Suparṇī* and *Kadrū*, we find the conception of double-headed *Aditi* who was the same as *Suparṇī*, i. e. eagle. In the Mahābhārata we read of Bhāruṇḍa birds with a double head tagged to a single body (*Ekodara Pṛithag-grīva*, Bhīsma parva 8. II). [Fig. 29].

7. Animals with interlacing necks (*Ekagrīva Bahūdara*) which were depicted in Sumerian art, also in the Atharva Veda we read of ten calves with a single head (*Eka-śīrshāṇaḥ daśavatsāḥ*, AV. 13. 4. 6.), a motif referring to the single principle of *Prāṇa* with its ten aspects. At Ajanta is a figure of four deer with one neck. [Fig. 30]. This motif continued in medieval art under the name of *Pañcha-śarīrī*, etc.

8. Animals posed in profile with head forward *Utkshipta-Śiras*), with heads facing (*Āvṛitta-Śiras*) and with heads turned back (*Parivṛitta-Śiras*).

9. Animals addorsed or with backs touching (*Pṛishṭha-gamita*), as the lions on the Aśokan Capital, also known as *Saṅghāṭa*, as *Haya Saṅghāṭa*, *Gaja-Saṅghāṭa Siṁha-Saṅghāṭa* etc, as on the pillar capitals in the Karle *Chaitya*-hall. These animals were also depicted affronted (*Sammukhī-kṛita*). Sometimes they were depicted as decorative motifs on friezes, coping-stones and lintels of early Indian art, and at other times they are showu in combating poses, e. g. *Garuḍa* and *Nāga* in Mathura relief, or lions and elephants on the high plinth at Ellora. [Fig. 31-32].

10. *Sūrya*, riding in a chariot of four horses, originally a Vedic motif with alternative number of horses as seven. On Bodh-Gayā railing the earliest figure of *Sūrya* is depicted in a car of four horses. In Bhājā cave (2nd cent. B.C.) there is a figure seated in a chariot of four horses moving on the back of corpulent demons who is often taken as Sūrya, but is really Māndhātā on his visit to Uttarakuru. At Mathura in Kushāṇa art Sūrya is shown with two or four horses, a tradition continued in Gandhāra and Sassanian art, as in the image from Khair Khaneh (near Kābul) ; but from Gupta period onwards Sūrya's car was drawn by seven horses as in the Vedic and Purāṇic traditions. [Fig. 33].

11. Battlement motif—This is the same as *Kapi-śīrshaka* of Indian architecture and is a favourite motif in Mesapotamia and India. We find it at Susa, Persepolis, Sanchi, Barhut, Mathura, Bodh Gaya and in Gandhāra art. [Fig. 34]

12. Tree of Life. Originally a Vedic motif as Aśvatta, or Kalpa-Vṛiksha, Tree of Heaven or Soma Plant of Immortality; it is found in Nordic mythology as the Tree of Existence, Yggddrasil and also in Egypt and Western Asia. In the Vedic legend it was Suparṇa, the great Garuḍa, who transported the Elixir of Life from the region of the Gods. In art we find the Tree of Life being worshipped by two Suparṇas (Sanchi East Gate-way) and we clearly see the same motif in Egypt and Mesopotamia worshipped by two Harpies or winged human-faced birds. This Tree was later on styled as Śrī-Vṛiksha, Tree of Prosperity and depicted at Sanchi in a manner similar to that in Western Asia, i.e. by the technique of repeat motif. It is also seen in a conventionalised form on the door-way of the Deogarh temple. [Fig. 35].

13. Palmette and Honeysuckle, the first is the *tāla-parṇa* motif of Indian art, also represented as *tāla-dhvaja* or *tālaketu* with its capital formed of palm-leaves, as at Mathura. Honey-suckle is taken by Coomaraswamy as Blue Lotus, but it seems to be a flower comprised of six anthers and a pistīl in the middle, probably the Indian *Muchukunda* flower (*Pterospermum Suberifolium*). Both Palmette and Honeysuckle are found as alternating motifs on the frieze of the Rampurvā Bull-Capital of Aśoka. [Fig. 36]

Many other geometrical designs as triangle, square, *Svastika*, *Nandyāvarta*, and floral motifs as lotus, *chaturdalapushpa* (four-petalled flower, Hindi *chauphuliā* चौफुलिया), pīpal leaf, acanthus leaf (*kaṇṭakāri*) occur as motifs common to Indian and what is here termed as Jambudvīpa art. As Coomaraswamy has pointed out, the fret (*gavāksha* and *kuñjarāksha*), spiral (*āvarta* or *bhramaraka*, Hindi चकभौंरा), volute (*vallana* or *loḍaka*, Hindi : *Belan-loḍhā* बेलन-लोढ़ा), labyrinth (*vyūha*), spider's-web (*ūrṇa-vābhi* ; Hindi *Makaḍā* मकड़ा) are some of the motifs that have survived in folk-art up to our own times. [Fig. 37]

The stock of decorative motifs and thematic representations in early Indian art is so exceptionally rich, well defined and widely distributed that one is obliged to believe a preceding ancient tradition cultivated for many centuaries in wood, clay, ivory, semi-precious stones, glass, textiles and metal. We have already cited some literary references in proof of their existence in the long expanse of time covered by the civilisation of the Janapada age. What we come across in the Maurya, Śuṅga and Sātavāhana periods was a normal evolution of earlier art-forms and not an avalanche of borrowing that visited suddenly. It is therefore essential for understanding the inspiration and meaning of Indian art-forms to go deeper into their literary traditions from the Vedic to the Purāṇic period, and also to correlate them with continued survivals in folk-art and other formal arts up to our own times.

CHAPTER VI

6. ŚAIŚUNĀGA-NANDA PERIOD

We are now moving to the art remains of the historical period, of which the Cyclopian walls of Girivraja or old Rājagṛiha founded by the kings of the Bṛihadratha dynasty, new Rājagṛiha founded by Bimbisāra of Śaiśunāga dynasty, and Pāṭaliputra founded by Ajātaśatru are noteworthy for throwing light on the fort and city architecture, besides the burial mounds at Lauriā Nandangarh with their wooden pillar and gold plaque of the Mother Goddess, crystal reliquary and other semi-precious objects from the Piparahwā Stūpa, polished ring stones about 40 in number found at several ancient sites and the pre-Mauryan antiquities from the Bhīr mound at Taxila form the main items of study.

Girivraja or the city of hills is said in the Mahābhārata to belong to the *Bārhadrathas* in which line Jarāsandha was a great ruler. The planning of the city and the execution of the stupendous walls of fortification was the work of a genius, an outstanding feat of architectural skill. The area is girdled by five hills mentioned in the Sabhā Parva (19. 2) and said to be rich in water and cattle wealth and full of a complement of large building (*Veśmāḍhya*). The hills are now known as Vaibhāra-giri in the north-west, Vipula-giri in the north-east, Ratnagiri in the east, Udaya-giri in the south and Soma-giri in the south-west. The five hills form a girdle like the walls of the town and their circuit is stated by Yuan-Chwang to be about 25 miles. Cunningham's survey on the spot shows it to be 8· 3 miles only, but as the great rampart has also been traced up to Giriyeka which is about 6 miles in the east the statement of Yuan Chwang that the circuit of the wall was 25 miles seems to be correct. [Fig. 38].

The old walls forming the exterior lines of rampart (*Pāshāṇa-prākāra*) are still to be seen in many places and one ran in a continuous line from Vaibhāra to Vipula, from Vipula over Ratna-giri to the present Nekpai embankment, and then onward over Udai-giri and across the southern defile of the Bāṇa Gaṅgā to Sonagiri. The wall is built of massive unhewn stone blocks placed one above the other without any mortar. Its height varies at places rising upto 11-12 ft. At the southern outlet of the Bāṇa-Gaṅgā, the wall is still in good order being 13 ft. thick although varying to 17· 5 ft. in thickness at other places. There are traces of steps on the inner side built in the wall itself, bastions at regular distances, and gateways thus presenting a picture of the fort wall complete with *Aṭṭālaka* and *Gopura*. [Fig. 39]. Inside the fort wall and in the centre of valley was the town proper, called Magadhapura in the epic, also surrounded by an inner wall about 5 miles in circuit which once contained the palace of

Jarāsandha comprising three courts (*Tri-kakshyā*) as stated in the Sabhā Parva. Because of its strong defences Kṛishṇa with Bhīma and Arjuna could find access not through the regular city gates but by scaling over the hills.

Outside the bigger fort wall and to the north of it is the new Rājagṛiha founded by Bimbīsara and so named as to distinguish it from Girivraja or old Rājagṛiha. It is an irregular pantagon which also had an outer and an inner wall, the latter being 3·3 miles in circuit which was surrounded by ditches.

Of the monuments on the Vaibhāra hill is the *Sapta-parṇī* cave situated to the west of the hot springs (*Taptoda-kuṇḍa*) and also *Pippala-guhā*. On Vaibhāra is also another cave, called *Sona-Bhaṇḍāra* or Treasury of gold, excavated in the rock being $34' \times 17' \times 11\frac{1}{2}'$. By its side was another cave (22·5 ft. × 17 ft.), both once having a front verandah supported on pillars of which only socket holes now remain. The Sapta-parṇī cave consists of a series of seven chambers separated by natural walls of rocks running east and west, the various chambers being neither regularly shaped nor equal in size, but having in front of the cave a long narrow flat ledge of rock about 25 ft. wide. There were at one time many Stūpas on the Vaibhāra and Vipula hills made of large-sized bricks. Mount Vipula still is crowned by the ruins of a lofty Stūpa.

In New Rājagṛiha a notable monument is the site of the citadel, 2000 ft. long and 1500 ft. broad, of which the stone walls retaining the earthen rampart are still in good order in many places and more massively and carefully built than the walls of the town. To the south-west of New Rājagṛiha Yuan Chwang had seen and described an Aśokan pillar (50 ft. high) with an elephant capital and also a Stūpa 60 ft. in height.

Giriyeka now to the east of Rājagṛiha forms part of its architectural planning and was encircled by a rampart similar to that of Rājagṛiha. It is identified with the site of the ancient *Indra-Śaila Guhā* but at present one of its peaks is crowned by a solid tower of large bricks known as *Jarāsandha kā Baiṭhaka* and the other peak bears a flat terrace covered with ruins of several buildings, both connected with the foot of the hill by a steep pavement. [Fig. 40]

Lauriā Nandangarh, a village known for its Aśokan pillar (whence its name, Skt. *Lakuṭa*, Hindi *Laur* लौर), is 15 miles north-west of Betiah in Champaran District, and is also the site of another interesting remains, viz. three rows of earthen barrows or huge conical mounds of earth, of which two of the rows lie from north to south, and the third from west to east. These were identified by Cunningham as sepulchral mounds and asigned to a period between 1500 B. C. and 600 B. C., associated in local tradition as the burial mounds of the Chakravartī king Uttānapāda.

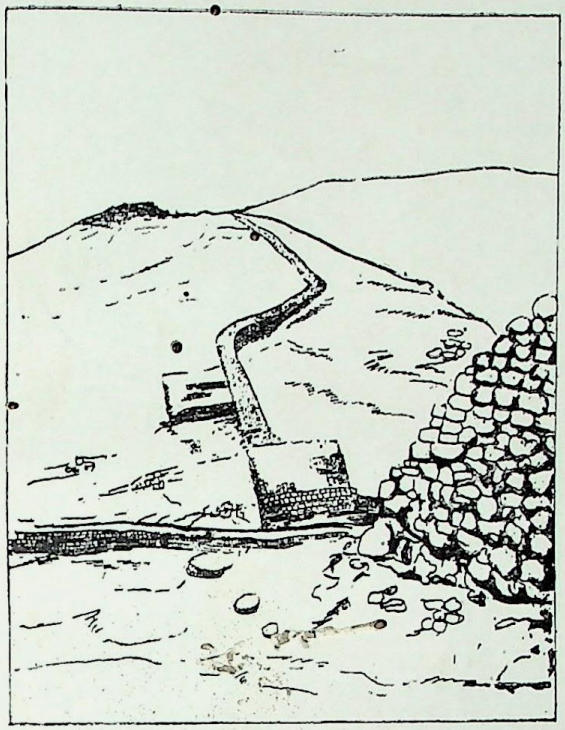


Fig. 39

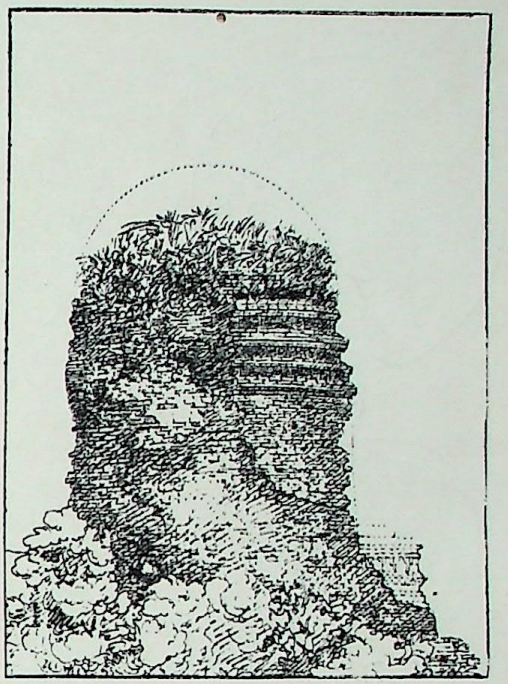


Fig. 40

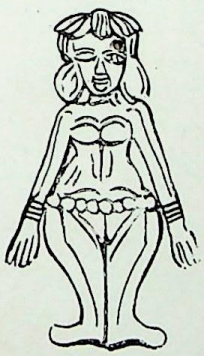


Fig. 42

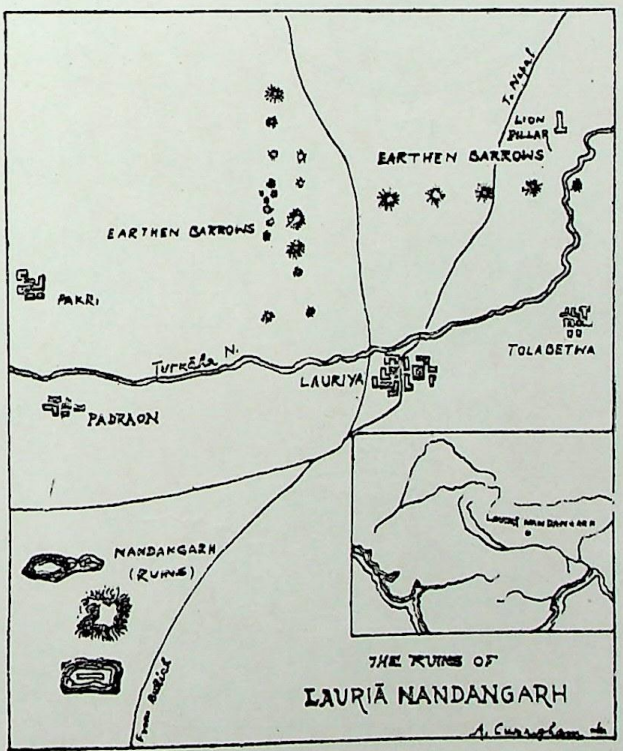
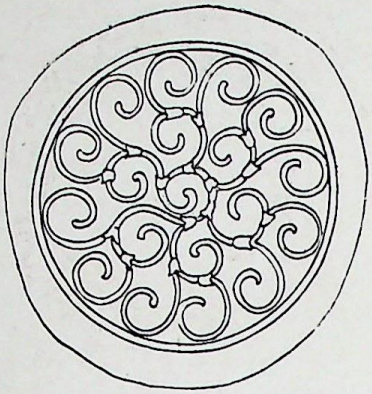


Fig. 41

(1)
Fig. 43

PLATE XIV

(4)



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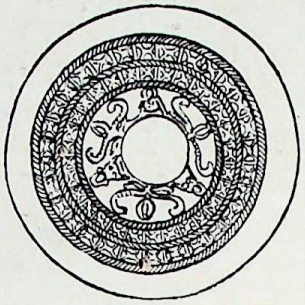

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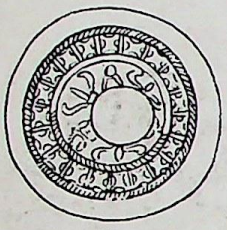

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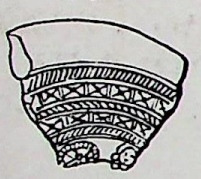

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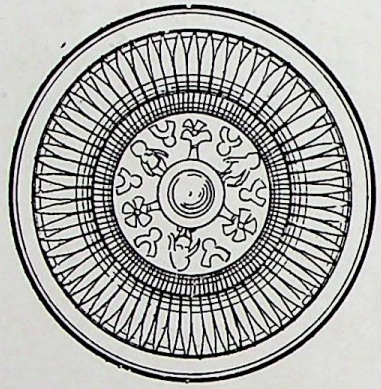

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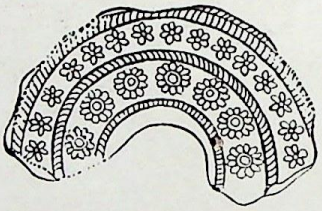

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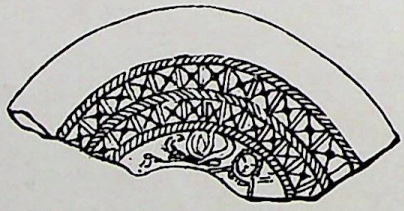

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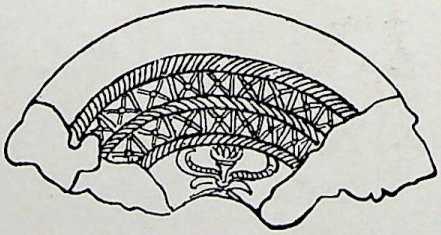

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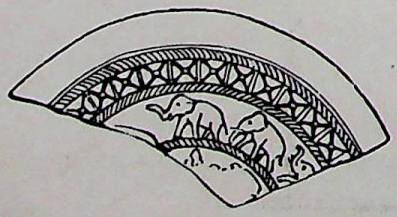

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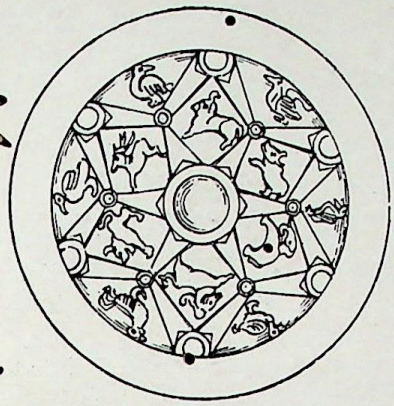
Fig. 43



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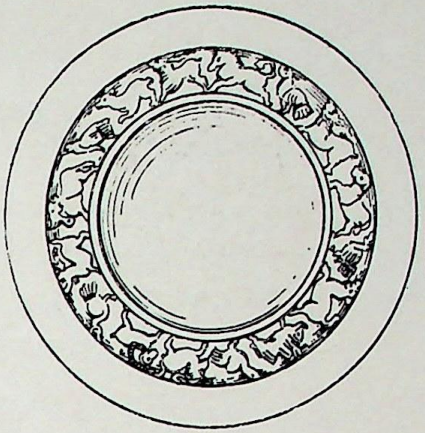

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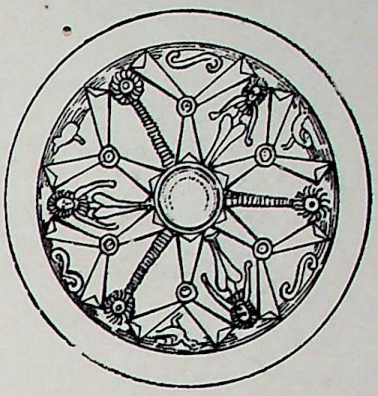

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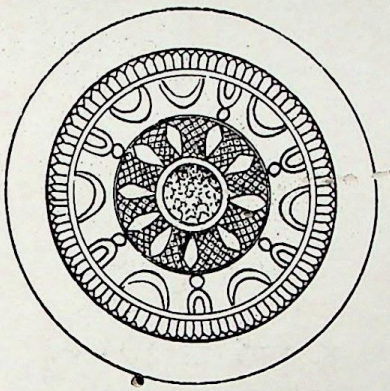

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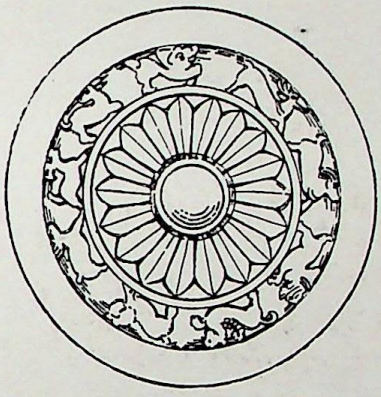

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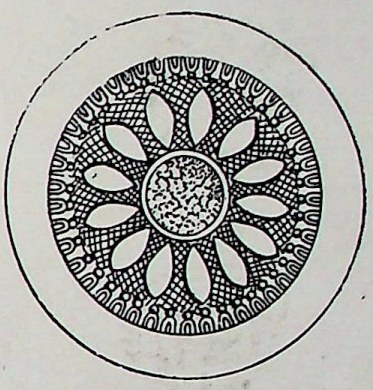


(22f)

(20)
Fig. 43

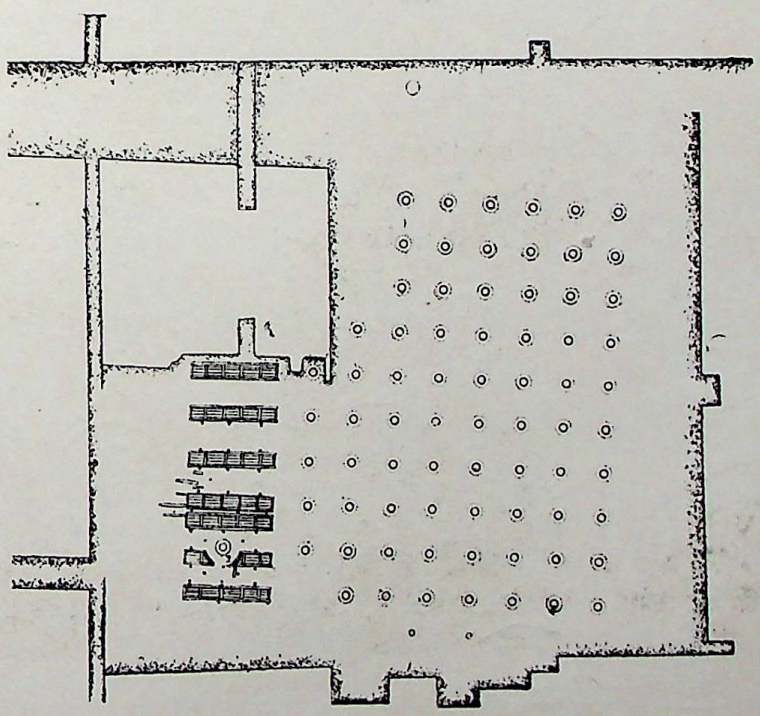
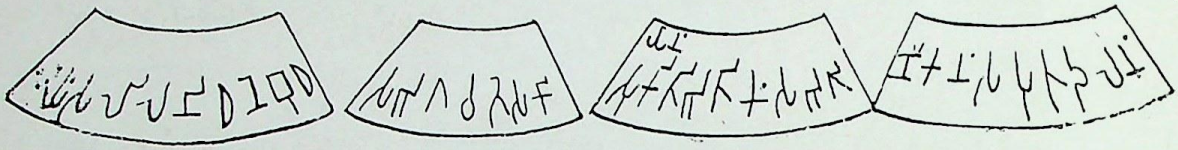


Fig. 45

(21)
Fig. 43

PLATE XVI

a



b

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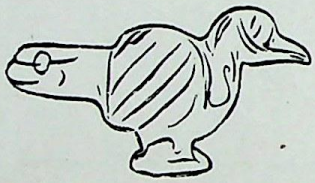
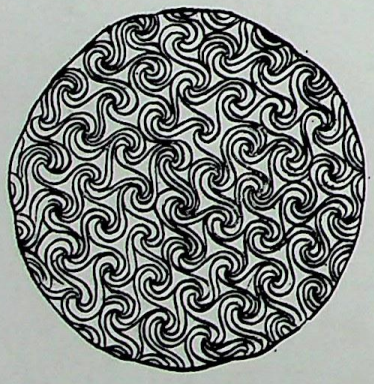


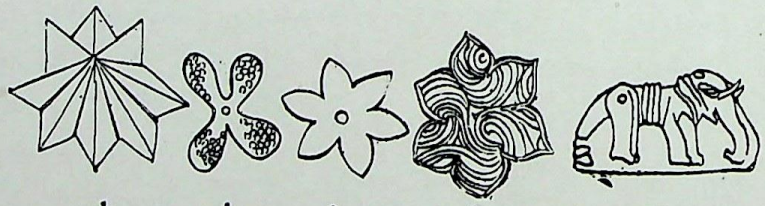
d

e

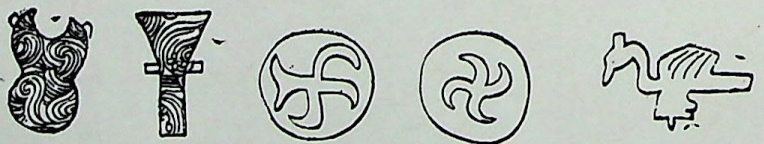
f



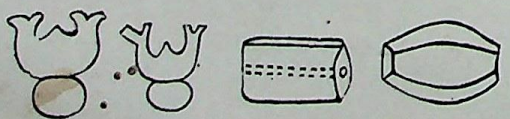
g



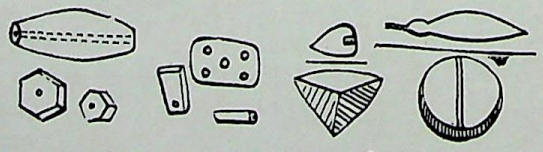
h i j k l



m n o p q



r ṣ t u



v w x y

Fig. 44

Their character of burial mound (*śmaśāna-chaitya*) seems to be supported by the wooden post found in the centre of one of them, known as the lofty *Chaitya-yūpa* (*chaitya-yūpa-ivochchhritaḥ*, Sabhāparva, 22 22 ; Kṛishṇa riding on Garuḍa looked like a lofty sacrificial pillar on the top of a burial mound). There are five barrows in the east and west row and six barrows in the inner north and south row, while the outer north and south row has four large and at least seven small barrows. The mounds in the row from east to west range in height 20 to 45 feet and all are made of clean earth and those in the north-south row from 15 to 55 feet. [Fig. 41].

Two of the mounds are formed of a whitish clay, kneaded so hard that it turned the edges of common digging tools, and when freshly cut glistens and has a bluish tint. The clay is foreign to the surrounding area and must have been brought from a distance for a definite purpose. In the burial hynm there is mention of the depositing of clods of earth (*Loya*) over the body of the dead, raising a pillar (*Sthūṇā*) and making it firm on the earth (*Pṛithivī-stambhana*, RV. X. 18.13). Bloch actually found a *repoussé* gold plaque depicting the earth goddess in the characteristic pose of the ancient Mother-Goddess figurines, also depicted on ancient small rectangular metallic pieces from Rajgir (now one in Bhārat Kalā Bhavan and one in Lucknow Museum). [Fig. 42]

Mother-Goddess Ring-stones

As specimens of the earlier tradition of the worship of the Mother-Goddess, we find a number of ring-stones distributed from Taxila to Pāṭaliputra. They are of hard sandstone in black, violet or slate colour and are of flat discoiled form, with or without a hole in the centre and showing the Mother-Goddess in various combinations or only having plural geometrical patterns. The specimens abtained so far are as follows :

1. A ring-stone from Mathura, now in the Indian Museum (ASI, AR. 1930-34, pl. cxxx. fig. 1). [Fig. 43].

2. A ring-stone from Mathura, now in the Indian Museum (ibid, fig. 2).

3. A circular sandstone plaque from Mathura, showing an eight-petalled lotus in the centre from which four stalks shoot out in the four directions and bend in various foliated patterns, showing on the terminal or pericarp eight female figures, in dancing hand-poses, four of which have survived on the semi-circular portion of the side. The female figures alternate with the design resembling the '*muchukunda*' flower.

4. A ring-stone from Mathura (diameter 3·5″ ; Mathura Museum, No. 2471) showing in the ceutre a full-blown lotus flower without spreading tendrils, of which the first band depicts four animals in the four intermediate directions, viz., a lion, an antelope, a bull and a stag, and the outer band showing four flowery motifs above the

four animals, and in the four cardinal points four female figures (now effaced), the first holding a bow in left hand and a sheaf of arrows in the right; the second standing with her right hand holding a bowl and left placed on the hip; and the third figure with a trident in right hand and a double-sided Vajra in the left.

5. Disc from Mathura (diameter 3·8″, No. 2472, Mathura Museum), showing a decorative pattern of tendrils round a central point, a motif seen also on the ancient-most punch-marked coins. The whole pattern takes the form of the six-armed (*shaḍara*) symbol, each arm having the form of a triskeles (*triphaṇa*).

6. Fragment of a ring-stone from Kosam, showing an outer and inner bands of rosette-flowers (now in the Allahabad Museum).

7. One ring-stone from Rajghat (in Bhārat Kalā Bhavan), showing three Mother-Goddesses alternating with three *liṅga*-symbols flanked by two cobras and an outer band of trapezoid design.

8. A fragment of a ring stone similar to No. 7 above, but encircled by a double outer band of similar design.

9. Fragment of a ring-stone from Rajghat (now in Bhārat Kalā Bhavan) showing on the inside head and bust of the Mother-Goddess with the upper portion of a palm tree.

10. A ring-stone fragment from Rajghat (Bhārat Kala Bhavan), showing two Mother-Goddesses on the inside and in the outer band two sprawling human figures floating in the air with a lizard in between them.

11. Fragmentary ring-stone from Rajghat (now in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan), showing in the inner band four Mother-Goddesses alternating with palm trees, three of whom are seen, and in the outer band a series of lizards or crocodiles (*Makara*) of whom there were originally eight, five being still preserved.

12. Ring-stone from Rajghat (now in Lucknow Museum), showing on the inside five *Śrīvatsa* symbols alternating with five *Muchukundas* or honey-suckle motifs. The outer band is crowded by a number of figures, showing three palm trees and three Mother-Goddesses—(a) Mother-Goddess with hare on right and moon-symbol below, and deer on left with a taurine symbol in front of him; (b) Palm tree with a bird on right and an animal on left with the symbol of moon and sun clearly; (c) Mother-Goddess with a *Sārasa*-like bird on right, the figure on left effaced; (d) Palm tree of which only the lowermost portion of circular railing is now left; (e) Mother-Goddess, the full figure with splay-feet and stiff straight arms, and turbaned head, being preserved, flanked by two animals. The left one being a horse and having a solar symbol in front and a moon symbol below. In between the railing of the last palm tree

and right leg of the Mother-Goddess is a small ring-stone ; (f) Palm tree in railing with a bird on right and horse on left.

13. A ring-stone from Taxila perfectly preserved; inside its central hole are three nude figures of the Goddess of fertility, wearing a prominent hood like some of the Kulli clay-figurines, alternating with three other figures, showing flames of Agni enkindled in an altar, flanked by two cobras. Round the innermost band are two outer bands of trapezoid figures or what may be described as a reel-and-bead border separated by cable-design (Marshall, MIC. 1, p. 62, pl. 13, fig. 14.)

14. Another ring-stone from Taxila (ASIAR , 1920-21, pl xvii, fig. 29-30).

15. A fragmentary disc from Taxila similar to number 13, showing the Agni and flanking serpents designed in a much clearer form and the two encircling bands are treated with a series of juxtaposed *Damarū* motifs, with a vertical slit in between each pair resembling the female *Yoni*.

16. Fragmentary ring-stone from Taxila on which in the middle band was a row of twelve walking elephants, three of whom are preserved.

17. One ring-stone from Basārh (ASI, AR. 1903-4, P. 100, fig. 16); HIIA. p. 20).

18. A ring stone from Basārh or Vaiśālī, found in 1950 excavation, now in the Patna Museum.

19. Complete ring-stone disc from Saṅkisā, with three Mother-Goddesses, three fan-palms and three taurines. Diameter 2″. The second and third zones consist of the dog-tooth design (*Champā-kalī*). (Cunningham, ASR, Vol. 11, Pl. 9. 3; Coomaraswamy, HIIA, P. 20, fig. 134).

20. Cylinder-seal from Kosam in the CAA Museum, New Delhi, engraved with bird and animal figures in chequered pattern.

21. A cylinderical seal from Rajghat showing a bull with a crib similar to that on the Indus Valley seals, bearing on the ring a Brahmī inscription.

22. Ring-stones (21 stone discs) were found in Murtazi-ganj quarter of Patna city.[1]

23. A ring stone from Patna City found in sewer excavations showing a fifteen-petalled lotus flower in the centre encircled by a beautiful garland of 18 taurines in smaller size, a motif well known in early art. It has a few letters engraved on the back but not yet deciphered.

1. See the article 'Stones Discs found at Murtaziganj' by S. A. Shere, Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XXXAII, pts. 3-4, 1951.

24. A ring stone from Patna City found in sewer excavation as above, showing three concentric bands, the first showing 21 lotus petals, the second 12 animals and birds including a horse, a lion, an elephant, a rhinoceros, moving in a file and the third a design like pencils of light.

Recently three more ring stones from the Allahabad museum, find-spot unknown, have been published, the one showing two bands of crosses and cables and on the inside a Mother-goddess, flanked by a fan-palm; the second chocolate coloured showing in the outer band a row of *Makara* figures and in the inner a row of lions; and the third of grey stone showing honeysuckle or '*Muchukunda*' flower, alternating with pairs of two birds perched on the two sides of the branch of a tree. (*Lalit Kala*, IX. 15, pl. 6, fig. 14).

Another ring stone from Vaiśālī or 'votive steatite circular disc from the strata, assigned to 150 B.C.—100 A.D., has a honeysuckle motif, *pīpal* trees, winged lions and two attractive female figures carved on it', who are the usual Mother-Goddesses (*Lalit Kala*, IX. 68).

These are fortunately in perfect preservation and richly documented with the idea underlying this class of antiquities. They illustrate the figures of the Mother-Goddess, standing with splayed feet, stiff erect posture, nudity and a close resemblance with the figure on the gold plaque from Lauriā Nandangarh and with the clay-figurines from Taxila and other places, which are associated with the traditional form of the Great Goddess. The other features on these discs are figures of the palm tree, alternating with the Goddess, figures of animals of wide variety, e.g. lion, elephant, bull, horse (the four great animals of the Sārnāth Capital, depicted together on disc No. 7), dog, boar, stag, deer, ram. Amongst birds we find the goose, peacock, crane, heron, etc. The palm tree is oft-repeated with the Goddess and emphasises its intimate relation with the cult. We also find certain patterns of the central lotus or rayed solar orb, honey-suckle, triangles, taurines, crescents, etc. The figures or symbols on the Patna discs are essentially the same, found on the ring-stones or discs from Taxila, Mathura Kosam, Saṅkisā, Basārh, etc. The cult character based on an underlying unity of the deity is undoubted.

Mother-Goddess Śrī [Mātā Śrī Devī]

What is the name of the Goddess and of the cult in the Indian tradition, are relevant questions to grasp the significance of these ring-stones or discs. The name for them is '*Śrī-Chakra*' (also called *Śrī-Yantra* in the later tradition), being aniconic representations of the Mother Goddess worshipped both in human and symbolical form, which are in force upto this day. A commentary on the nature of

the cult is available in the *Srī Sūkta*, an apocryphal hymn (*Khila-Sūkta*) at the end of the fifth Maṇḍala of the Ṛigveda. All the different characteristics found on the discs are included in the description, which certainly formed part of folk-lore poetry. The Goddess is there identified with earth (*Devī Kshmā* or *Bhūmi*) and is named Mother-Goddess *Śrī* (*Devīṁ Mātraṁ Śriyam*) and conceived of as the Mother of all creatures (*Prajā Bhūtā*) including animals (*Paśūnāṁ rūpaṁ*), spouse of Vishṇu (*Vishṇu-patnīm*), and the supreme deity of the universe (*Sarva-bhutānāṁ Īśvarī*). She is associated with both Sun and Moon being called, Sūryā and Chandrā. Lotus is her symbol as her seat (*Padme sthitā*), as the centre of her disc (*Padma-nemi*), as its encircling garland (*Padma-mālinīm, Pushkariṇī*). She is born from the waters from which her lotus takes root (*adbhyaḥ padmasambavā*) surrounded by lotus-buds and leaves, as depicted on some of the discs. Her devotees in the cult were known as *Śrī-kāma* for whom she was both the Goddess of prosperity (*dhanadāyī and mahā-dhanā*) and fertility (*prajānāṁ bhavasi mātā, putra-pautra-dhanaṁ dhānyaṁ karotu me*). Characteristic animals on the disc are included amongst her gifts, e.g. elephants (*hastī*), cows and horses (*Aśva-dāyī, Go-dāyī*). The later iconographic feature of the two elephants be-sprinkling her is here mentioned (*ārdrāṁ kariṇim*). She is the giver of food (*Annasya-rūpaṁ*) whose Tree is the Bilva, but on the discs we find the palm tree depicted as the ancient symbol of all food, being the Tree of Life, the fruit of the fan-palm (*Flabella-formis*) being similar to that of the Bilva (*Aegle marmalos*). The Goddess is said to have the attribute of the golden rod enriched with golden necklaces (*Hema-mālinī suvarṇa-yashṭi*) which exactly corresponds to the Tree of Golden Necklaces depicted at Sānchī. She loves the sound of trumpeting elephants (*Hasti-vāda-pramodinī*) as actually shown by the elephant-band on one of the discs. Her water cosmology is indicated by the encircling zone of *Makaras* depicted on two discs, and by her being spoken of as the daughter of the ocean in later legends. She is the Fleet Lady, but the worshipper wishes her stable stay in his home (*Anapagāminī-Lakshmī*, same as *Achañchalā*), a pose shown by her feet turned outwards in the majority of figures, as also on the Lauriā gold-foil. The disc is conceived as her *Chakra* or *Maṇḍala*, as still known to the cult-worshippers (*Śrī-Chakra-Pūjaka*), which is a kind of citadel of the Goddess *Śrī*, *Śrī-Yantra*, being encircled by a rampart of gold (*Hiraṇya-prākāram*). That which is under the influence of the Goddess within the orbit of her *Chakra* is full of abundance (*Riddhi*), prosperity (*Dāna*), longevity (*Āyuḥ*), and progeny (*Prajā*). This by implication signifies that the range outside her *Chakra* is under the influence of Asuras and beyond the power of her golden splendour, and therefore under the sway of *Alakshmī* (mentioned in the Atharva as *Pāpī-Lakshmī*, 7. 115. 4), also named *Jyeshṭā-Alakṣhmī* here, who is the symbol of *Abhūti* and *Asamṛiddhi* ; both sisters occupy

the inner and the outer regions of the *Chakra* respectively (*Yā antarā yā'cha bāhyā*). In the Sūkta, *Śrī-Devī*, Goddess *Śrī* is definitely called *Devatā* (*Śrī-devī-devatā*), a conception popular in the epics where she is referred to as *Padmā-Srī* (Ayodhyā kāṇḍa, 79.15 ; *Padminī-Lakshmī-devī*, Sundara Kāṇḍa, 7. 14 ; *śarīriṇī padma-rupā Śrī*, Āraṇyaka Parva, 218. 3). The conception of *Śrī* and *Lakshmī* was so old as the Yajurveda where they are adored as the two consorts of *Nārāyaṇa-Purusha Vishṇu* (Yajus. 31. 22). Later on they are mentioned both separately as in *Śrī-Sūkta*, or in the Sabhā Parva (11. 40). *Śrī* and *Lakshmī* are present in *Brāhmī-Sabhā* jointly or as a single Goddess. It is to be noted that this Goddess worshipped as the Great Mother from the oldest times was venerated throughout the country from Taxila to Orissa and by the followers of Buddhism, Jainism and Brāhmanism. Her popular origin is hinted at in several ways, i. e. by her identity with the Earth, and by her birth from the waters on the one hand and from heaps of cow-dung on the other (*Karīshiṇī*).

The meaning of the ring-stone is clear in the context of Indian religious beliefs. Sir John Marshall, making a probe into the meaning of these ring-stones, says : "It could hardly have been utilitarian, nor are they suited for personal ornaments. The nude figures engraved on them appear to represent a Goddess of fertility, perhaps the Earth-Goddess, *Pṛithivī*, and they point to the disc having served as votive offerings. The earth itself, it may be recalled, was conceived of as 'wheel-shaped' in the Ṛigveda, and is said to be 'circular' in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. With these may be compared a seal from Harappa (No. 649) exhibiting the Goddess of Fertility with her legs wide apart, but portrayed upside down, with a plant issuing from her womb. These figures of the Fertility-Goddess are particularly significant, because the form of the ring-stones from Taxila and Kosam also call to mind the peculiar ring-stones from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro." (ASIAR. 1927-28, p.96).

The Buddist Stūpa of Piparahwā and its Relics

Amongst pre Mauryan relics those found inside the oldest known Stūpa at Piprahwā (Dist. Basti) on the Nepal border, 11 miles from Kapilvastu are most important. The Stūpa, 116 feet in diameter at the base and 21·5 feet in height at present, was built in brick (16″/11″/3″) as a solid cupola, with excellent masonry, well and truly laid, containing inside it a great sandstone coffer, made out of a huge monolith with a lid fixed by clamps, having perfect edges, bespeaking the highest quality of craftsmanship. According to an inscription, the Stūpa was built by the Śākhyas, relatives of the Buddha, to enshrine a part of his original relics (*iyaṁ salila nidhane Budhasa Bhagavate śakiyānam*). The stone box cointained in a casket not only some scraps of bone as relics but several hundreds of other articles of high artistic value, e.g. ornamental forms, flowers and leaves wrought in various semi-precious stones as carnellion, amythist, topaz, garnet, coral, crystal, shell and metal (*Ratna-pushpa*)

and gold (*Svarṇa-pushpa*), all in exquisite designs. They included a squire gold leaf stamped with a lion, gold leaf stars, delicately carved miniature leaves of crystal and other substances, *Tri-ratna*, gold leaf cross, a coil of fine silver wire, *Svastika* stamped on gold leaf, taurine symbols stamped on gold leaf, small pearls, bead of beryl; topaz etc., a small bird in red-carnellion carved with great skill, an elephant in gold leaf, a figure of the Earth-Goddess stamped on gold foil closely resembling Earth-Goddess from Lauriā Nandangarh, another standing female figure heavily draped, having an elaborate fan-like coiffure, marked by some auspicious symbols fixed in the hair. A remarkable decorative design is found on a large disc of gold leaf, consisting of rows of whorls with six wavy arms going round a centre, an intricate form of *Āvarta*, covering the whole field in a symmetrical way forming an intricate *Vyūha*.

Amongst other relics are pots, covered bowls, round relic-caskets, including one made of cut and polished crystal with a lid beautified on the top by a fish-design, most minutely worked and highly polished, which gives an indication of the extremely fine workmanship of the lapidarists, who lived and worked a couple of centuries before the execution of the Mauryan columns.[1] [Fig. 44]

1. See Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume, Vol. III, pp. 425 to 428; JRAS, 1898, pp. 573-588.

CHAPTER VII

7. MAURYAN ART (325-184 B. C.)

The political picture clarifies with the coronation of Chandragupta Maurya, about 323 B. C., on the throne of Magadha, with capital at Pāṭaliputra. He was an emperor, a *Chakravartī* sovereign, true to ancient tradition ruling over a large part of India, from Bāhlīka te Bengal in the east and from the Himalayas to Mysore in the south. He had an extraordinary genius for political organisation and the prosperous government he established with the help of his able minister, Chāṇakya, bore lasting fruits for civilisation of the country. He was succeeded by his son Bindusāra (298-272 B. C.) and the latter by his son Aśoka (272-232 B. C.). This long period of peaceful rule and economic prosperity contributed to a national pattern of culture and art. We now enter the threshold of a mighty and creative civilisation, rich in content with lasting influence on subsequent generations.

Strength and majesty were the hall-mark of Mauryan Institution and they are seen at best in monuments of Mauryan art. In this period we meet with two styles which may be clearly distinguished, viz. court-art as evident in the building of the city of Pāṭaliputra, the palace with its assembly hall of Chandragupta and the numerous monuments of Aśoka. The other was a folk art tradition marked by some clay figurines but more conspicuously by a group of free-standing statues of colossal *Yaksha* and *Yakshīs* found at Mathura, Vidiśā, Vārāṇasī, Pāṭaliputra and Siśupālagarhj in Orissa. The court art was based for its ideas and execution on the inspiration of the emperors and the style is dominant and original and marked by a perfection of carving rarely achieved ever afterward. The planning of the monument is so vast aud grand that it has few parallels in World History. The folk art typifies an older plastic tradition in clay and wood which was now put in stone, as seen in the massive *Yaksha* statuary which are also of exceptional value as models of subsequent divine images and human figures.

ARCHITECTURE OF PĀṬALIPUTRA : The first project put into operation was the building of the capital city of Pāṭaliputra. Fortunately, the Arthaśāstra acquaints us with these canons under *Durga-vidhāna* (Artha. 2. 21). The town should have a deep moat (*Parikhā*), a strong city-wall (*Prākāra*) raised on broad mud foundation (*Vapra*), in which there were gateways (*Dvāra*), towers (*Koshṭha*), and bastions (*Aṭṭālaka*). On the inside of the high wall was a broad passage (*Devapatha*) and on the top of the wall a series of battlements (*Kapiśīrshaka*). The town was to be divided into blocks

by broad roads (*Mahāpatha*), streets (*Rathyā*) and lanes (*Vīthī*). In its centre was sited the royal palace (*Rāja-Prāsāda*) in the midst of an extensive park (*Uddyāna*) and possessing a large number of contingent buildings. This was the pattern of town-planning handed down from earlier times, as we have seen in the preceding chapters and it seems that the scheme was largely followed in the planning of his capital by Chandragupta. Megasthenes was the Greek ambassdor of King Seleukos sent to the court of Chandragupta. He was an eye-witness of the magnificance of Pāṭaliputra. According to him the city had a length of nine miles and a width of one and half mile. Its moat was 600 ft. wide and 45 ft. deep. Its rampart had 64 gates and 570 bastions. It would not be surprising if the account of an ideal city and palace given above from the Mahā-Ummagga Jātaka along the tank of the Gaṅgā reflects the realities of the Mauryan capital and its palace.

The actual remains of the city as explored upto now confirm the literary accounts. At Kumrahar remains of the palace and to its north at Bulandibaga a portion of the city-wall for a length of 450 ft. have been exposed. This agrees with the requirements of town-planning according to which the city-wall should have been removed from the palace area and on the outskirts of the town away from the Gaṅgā side. The partial remains of the solid city-wall consists of two rows of piles or stakes of *sāla* timber, each 18 ft. high and 1 ft. broad and both rows being bonded together by layers of cross planks about 14 ft. in length with earth tightly rammed in between them. The palisades of Pāṭaliputra are in the true sense a *Sāla-Prākāra.* No polished stones were found in the dig of the city-wall or none was needed there, whereas the Kumrahar site is full of them.

THE PALACE—At Kumrahar, site of old Pāṭaliputra, a mighty pillared hall of Mauryan date has been found which is the first structural building of the historical period. In theory a royal palace was planned in three courts (*Tisraḥ-Kakshyāḥ*). In the extensive first court there was room for royal stables, elephants and palace guards, in the second was the Audience Hall (*Sabhā* or *Āsthāna-Maṇḍapa*) and in the third court the main palace or inner apartment (*Rājakula*), all three in one alignment. The pillared hall now discovered is the *Sabhā* proper and it is expected that the main palace should be found by extending the axial line beyond the two pillars of the throne, making allowance of some space for the palace gardens (*Bhavanoddyāna*).

Whether the palace was built by Chandragupta or by Aśoka is a relevant question having great significance for the history of Mauryan art. The evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of Chandragupta as the author of the whole plan as well as its execution. Firstly, the primary exigencies of an empire needed a well-built

capital, palace and secretariat. Secondly, the testimony of Greek writers offers incontrovertible proof that the city and the palace existed long before Aśoka for Megasthenes actually saw them and recorded a factual account of the magnificence of the structure. Thirdly, the bottom of the pillars of the hall was engraved with several symbols including a set of three rows of three circles, taurine, triangle-headed standard (*Vaijayantī*) and crescent on Chaitya, the last sign being associated, with great probability, with Chandragupta Maurya, since it is commonly found on the Punchmarked coins of Mauryan date. This shows that the bright Mauryan polish and the tall column without base were both evolved in the time of Chandragupta. Aśoka himself refers to pre-existing pillars. Patañjali writing only about 125 years after Chandragupta refers to *Chandragupta-Sabhā*, by which name it seems the monument became known to posterity.

THE ASSEMBLY HALL—The asrembly hall discovered at Kumrahar was a mighty and imposing structure without parallel in Indian art. The building consisted of 80 pillars arranged in 8 rows of 10 each aligned east-west with two extra pillars at the eastern end most probably to accommodate the royal throne. The pillars have been found in a miserably broken condition due to the action of fire but the remains help us to reconstruct a fairly good picture of the original building. Each pillar stood exactly 15 ft. apart from the other. None of the columns had any pedestals and the pillars rested directly on the floor of the hall which together with the roof seems to have been a timber construction of maximum finish and grandiose execution, as shown by the surviving seven wooden platforms of great neatness and accuracy still found in marvellous preservation. Three bigger fragments of the pillars were exposed; but a fourth one 14 ft. 3 in. in height was almost the pillar with only its top missing, the probable total height was about 21 ft. and the girth as well as the shaft which is smooth and polished right down to the base are like those of an Aśokan pillar. In some of the top-fragments there are socket holes for metal bolts to hold the super-structure which show signs of burstings due to fire action. Under the bottom of each pillar was found a circle of deep ashes, pointing to the hypothesis that each pillar was erected on a wooden basement embedded in the earth. [Fig. 45.]

One noteworthy feature found on the bigger columns is the presence some 5 ft. above the actual bottom of four roughly-square bosses projecting slightly from the surface of the pillars, one on each of the four sides. Three of these are flushed with the column, and show a roughened surface which seems to be the result of breakage. The fourth projects a little more and bears unmistakeable signs of a fracture and on its neck is the bright polish as on the rest of the column. The bosses were intended either for fixing mirrors, different decorative motifs of birds

and animals to which Greek writers make reference and the account in the Sabhā Parva also lends support.

ASSEMBLY HALL IN THE SABHĀ PARVA—The Sabhā Parva describes the assembly hall of Yudhishṭhira with five others, viz. Indra, Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera and Brahmā (Sabhā Parva, 6. 11). It is clearly stated there that the assemblage of motifs observed in the divine halls was present in the human assembly hall of Yudhishṭhira which was the best in the world of men (*Mānushe loke sarva-śreshṭhatamā*, Sabhā. 11. 42). There are several striking features in this description hinting at significant parallels :

(1) The plan of the assembly hall was rectangular, the length being greater (*Āyatā*) than breadth (*Vistīrṇā*).

(2) It resembled a *Vimāna* floating in the sky (*Vaihāyasī*, Sabhā Parva, 7.2; *Khe vishaktā*, ibid, 10. 3 ; *Plavamānā*, ibid, 10. 4).

(3) It is a feature exemplified in the Mauryan art since the pillars only rest on the floor and not inserted in the ground. Even it is said that the general impression created by the stracture was that of an ever suspended canopy not resting on pillars (*Stambhair na cha dhṛitā śāśvatī.....nāka prishṭhasthā*, ibid. 11.11-12).

(4) It was a hall made of bright polished stones (*Maṇimayī-sabhā*, ibid, 6-10). Indeed the most characteristic feature of this *Sabhā* was its mirror-like finish which is expressed in about a dozen different terms (*Bhāsvarā, Taijasī, Arka-samaprabhā, Bhrājishṇu, Raśmivatī, Aprameya-prabhā, Svayam-prabhā, Sarvatejomayī*). It was beautified by many a decorative motifs, e. g. bejewelled trees (*Ratna-maya-vṛiksha*), golden plants (*Hema-maya-pādapa*, ibid, 10.3), studded shrubs (*Gulma*) and creepers (*avatāna*, ibid, 9.4), laden with flowers and fruits (*Phalapushpa-prada*) and blossoming sprigs (*Pushpa-mañjarī*) which were designed with gems of blue, yellow, red, white and black colours. On their dense foliage were birds of many forms (*nānārūpāḥ śakunayaḥ*) and of unknown shapes (*Anirdeśya*, Sabhā. 9.2-4), all wrought in semi-precious stones (*Divya-ratna*). This almost literally agrees with what the Greek writers have said about the assembly hall of Chandragupta :—"The palace is adorned with gilded pillars, clasped all round with a vine embossed in gold, white silver images of those birds which most charm the eye, diversify the workmanship."

A special architectural feature ot the pillard hall is given in the Sabhāparva, viz. that it was furnished with compartments for palacement of seats for its members (*Veśmāsanavatī*, 7.3, 9.5), a term of which the exact significance has been missed. If we have a view of the spacious hall (*Bhūyasī, Vipula*) divided into 8 rows of 10 pillars, the exact impression is that of its division into 63 squares plus the one on

the side of the throne towards the east. Each of these squares, separated from the other by stately stone columns, was used for placing a seat for each member of the Sabhā and hence the name *Veśmāsanā.*

Another feature of architecture is a reference to the Atlantes or crouching dwarfs (*Guhyaka*, Sabhā, 10.3), also *Kiṅkara* (3.25), who as it were supported the building on their heads and hands, which seems to be moving in the sky (*Antarikshacharā*, ibid, 3.26 ; *Khe-chara*, 10.2) and being huge in size (*Mahākāya*) of grotesque shape (*ghora*) with ears pointed above like oyster-shelf (*Śukti-karṇa*, ibid, 3.26). This architectural element has not been traced at Pāṭaliputra, but is a recognised feature in Chaitya halls of western India. There is no doubt that the pillared halls of the rock-excavations also followed the same ideal pattern.

In the epic description the greatest emphasis is laid on the lustrous polish which was a distinguishing feature of this hall. It turned back by its brightness the lustre of the sun and was as if burning (*Jvalamāna*) with unearthly brilliance :— *pratighnatīva prabhayā prabhām arkasya bhāsvarām, prababhau jvalamāneva divyā divyena varchasā* (Sabhā. 3.21). No modern writer has praised the Mauryan polish with greater zest. Its rectangular spacious shining form (*Āyatā, Vipulā, Ślakshṇā*) pleased everyone (*praharshiṇī*) and produced the impression as if it was made of crystal (*sphāṭikaṁ cha sabhā-dravyam*, ibid. 3-16). Spooner has mentioned the existence of two tanks to the north and south of the palace. 'At one point near the actual village of Kumrahar and to the west of it, an old tank cuts into this high ground on the southern edge of the main road. This is called *Kālū* tank. Some hundred yards south of this is another tank, the *Chaman-Tāla*'. This situation of the tank forming an integral part of the palace architecture agress quite well with the accounts both of the Greek writers and of Sabhā Parva. An extensive park and lotus pond were essential components in the planning of the royal Palace. The latter is mentioned in the Sabhāparva as *Nalinī* overgrown with beautiful and fragrant lotus flowers (*Padma-saugandhikavatī*), birds of many forms and aquatic fish and tortoise in the clear waters. There were well-formed landing steps on all sides (*Upatīrtha*). The Sabhāparva particularly mentions that the lotus pond and the royal groves were on the two sides of the assembly hall (*Taṁ sabhām abhitaḥ*, ibid. 3.31). It was full of tame geese, peacocks and phasants (*Haṁsa Kāraṇḍava-yutās Chakravākopaśobhitāḥ*, ibid. 3.32), shady groves and trees set in clumps with branches woven together by some special tricks of horticulture, trees that are always green (*Nityaṁ pushpavantaḥ*), that never grow old and never shed their leaves. In any future excavation of the sites the position of the royal pleasance and their tanks should also be a guide in fixing the relative orientation.

WOODEN PLATFORMS—The Seven wooden platforms lying to the south of the pillared hall, 30 ft. in length, 5 ft. 4 in. in width and 4½ ft. in height, have been adjudged to be wonderful structures showing much neatness and precision. The logs are staked one above the other bound together by accurately dressed planks. The ancient wood is in marvellous preservation and the edges are so perfect that the very lines of jointure are indistinguishable. The whole was built up with a precision and a reasoned care that could not possibly be excelled today.

We have seen enough details to convince that the planning of the capital and the palace was entirely in accordance with the canons of architecture received from olden times and clearly mentioned in the Jātakas, Epics and the Arthaśāstra. It is also testified that halls of a hundred and a thousand pillars were within the conception of the architects of Vedic times. But as the Greeks have said, all the cities on the banks of rivers were built of wood and this was also reflected in Pāṭaliputra except an innovation of stone pillars of the assembly hall, where the floor and the roofing were also of wood. Some ascribe the design and execution of the assembly hall and its columns to a foreign origin, viz. Iran, but that view will be examined later in the light of the evidence available. There is a world of difference between the Achaemenian pillars and the Mauryan pillars and the overall accomplishment of the palace at Pāṭaliputra was much superior to those in Iran; according to Aelian, "neither Memnonian Susa with all its costly splendeur nor Ekbatana with all its magnificence" could vie with the royal palace of Pāṭaliputra.

MAURYAN ART UNDER AŚOKA—Aśoka was a great idealist in the planning of human relationships, both amongst his own people and also his foreign neighbours. On the other hand, he was also intensely practical minded which expressed in recasting his administrative set-up in a manner to be of maximum service to his subjects, and what was no less important was his deciding upon a building programme of the most stupendous nature. The surviving monuments, diverse as they are, show that he had in his mind the whole country or his vast dominion (*mahālaka vijita*) extending from Kandahar to Dhauli and from Girnar to Mysore. This wide area was within the orbit of his positive planning and therefore he sited his fourteen rock-edicts at suitable points punctuating the perimeter of his kingdom. The next point in his plan was to plot the holy-spots associated with Buddha and Buddhism and to mark them with commemorative stone columns. These monolithic pillars constitute the most brilliant and original class of Aśokan monuments, and the lasting glory of Dharma and Saṅgha (*chila-thitīke*) is still made manifest through them. As in the rock-edicts so in selecting the spots for erecting the stone pillars there appears to be a two-fold plan in the mind of the Emperor. The columns at Pāṭaliputra, Lauriā Nandangarh, Lauriā Araraj, and Bakhirā mark the stages in the

Pilgrim's Progress to Lumbinī, the birth place of Buddha, where a pillar with a definite announcement was raised and nearby another column to commemorate the enlargement of a previous Buddhist Stūpa, both executed in the 20th year of his reign when he personally visited these places. The repairs to the Stūpa of Konākaman had been executed six years earlier (*thuve dutiyaṁ vaḍhite*). At Lumbinī, besides the stone pillar (*silā-thabhe cha usapāpite*) he also ordered the building of an enclosure-wall or railing (*bhichā*) carved of stone (*silā-vigaḍa* = Sans. *śilā-vikṛita*). In the same scheme the stone pillar at Sarnath marks the spot of Buddha's Turning the Wheel of Law (*Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana*). A pillar also stood at Bodhagaya showing the place of Buddha's Enlightenment. The other plan included the pillars to mark the boundaries of Madhyadeśa and the capital of its principal Janapada divisions, e.g. the pillar at Saṅkisā for Pañchāla, at Meerut for Kuru, at Rupar in Ambāla for Kurukshetra the region of Sarasvatī, at Sānchī for Chedi on the grand route from Mathura to Pratishṭhāna, at Śrāvastī in Basti district for Kosala, and at Kauśambī for Vatsa. Thus the capital cities and the boundaries of Āryāvarta, the heart of the Empire, were clearly distinguished.

The next two problems which exercised his mind were those relating to the idea which he wanted to convey and the form in which the same were to be concretised. The problem of transport, of course, was there, but tackled by his engineers with success in carrying huge monoliths of about 50 ft. to remote places from the central quarry at Chunār, where the imperial workshop for fabricating the tall shafts and capitals was situated. The smooth long shaft without basement had already been tried in the Pillared Hall of Chandragupta but the idea of crowning it with a magnificent capital was original to Aśoka. He had conceived one supreme message for his generation and for mankind, viz. the message of *Dharma* which had dawned on his mind out of a sincere and profound conversion. He had pondered over it deeply and discovered its many facets which he himself names as *Dhamma Kāmatā, Dhamma Ghoso, Dhamma Chalana, Dhamma Niyama, Dhamma Dāna, Dhamma Paṭipati, Dhamma Maṅgala, Dhamma Vijaya, Dhamma Saṁchava, Dhamma Susūsā, Dhammānusastu, Dhammānuggaho, Dhamma Sīlana,* etc. Underlying these multiple forms he had discovered the supreme truth that Dharma is one and indivisible and that it constitutes the Eternal Wheel of Cosmic Order which rolls on for ever in the moral, social and political spheres as Brahma Chakra, Brahmāṇḍa Chakra, Bhava Chakra, Kāla Chakra, etc. and which was essentially the same as the Mahā Dharma Chakra of the Buddha.

The second truth clear to him as basic to Dharma Chakra was the fourfold pattern of individual life, society and cosmos symbolised as the four sides of the *Anotatta* or *Mānasarovara* lake, each marked by one Great Animal (*Mahā Ājāneya*

Paśu). The tradition of the four animals had come down right from the Indus Valley and was deeply ingrained in popular consciousness and accepted by them as an essential element of cult-worship.

The philosophical idea behind the column and the capital having been determined by the Emperor himself with a clear conception of the tradition and of his own outlook, the problem of execution was no matter of difficulty. There were workers both in wood and stone who were past masters in making such columns. It is undisputed that the technique of fabricating them in wood was known from older times and it was merely the question of a change in the medium involving a transition from wood to stone. The lithic pillars in the Hall of Chandragupta *Sabhā* already preceded Aśoka as borne out by the testimony of Greek writers. Aśoka, therefore, was truly the author of both the idea and the form that his monumental capitals represent. The Stūpa, railing, parasol, *Bodhi* throne, pillar, capital, rock-cut Chaitya Hall and the huge stone figures like the elephant at Dhauli, each one of these was completely indigenous both in its form and meaning. To separate the stone pillars only from this imposing list of Aśokan monuments and to ascribe them to foreign imported workmen, is not justified by facts at our disposal, and not fair to their author.

The monuments of Aśokan art as preserved comprise the following:

(1) Stūpas of brick and mortar which have undergone subsequent enlargement.

(2) Monolithic stone pillars with large animal capitals. [Fig. 46].

(3) Monolithic stone railing preserved at Sarnath. [Fig. 47].

(4) Fragmentary parasol (*Chatra*) found at Sānchī.

(5) Rock-cut Chaitya Hall or cave dwellings (*Guhā*) in the Barābar hills in Gaya district. [Fig. 48].

(6) An elephant carved from the rock at Dhauli in Orissa.

(7) Elephant figure engraved on rock at Kalsi. [Fig. 49].

Aśoka himself mentions in the Lumbinī inscription that he had in addition to a stone column also erected a stone railing which it appears followed the model of the Sarnath railing. He also refers to an enlargement to twice its size of the original Stūpa of the previous Buddha Kanaka Muni at Niglīvā (*Buddasa konākamanasa thuve dutiyaṁ vaḍhite*). Tradition ascribes to him the foundation of two cities, viz. Śrīnagara (*Rājataraṅgiṇī*, I, 101-7) in Kashmir and *Devapattana* in Nepal (*CHI*, p. 501). His choice of a royal site in the Kashmir valley bespeaks his patronage of that beautiful valley possibly as opening a new territory or for resort near the western

province of Gandhāra. He also seems to have taken interest in the development of the river valleys of Nepal lying to the north of the central part of his empire. He is credited with the opening of the original eight Stūpas containing the relics of the Buddha and redistributing them over the ideal number of eightyfour thousand Stūpas traditionally mentioned as his *Vaistārika* activity. The Stūpas at Sarnath, Sanchi and probably Bharhut also were enlarged in Asoka's time by adding a brick casing round an earthen core, i.e. converting a small (*alpeśākhya*) Stūpa into a large one (*maheśākhya*).

The monolithic stone railing (*ekāśmaka vedikā*) found at Sarnath once crowned the dome of the so-called Jagat Singh Stūpa round its *Harmikā*. It is a square structure consisting of upright posts with three cross-bars between each pair, the whole cut out of a single huge mass of stone and distinguished by the bright Mauryan polish in all its parts. [Fig. 47].

Aśoka himself had lived at Vidiśā and married the daughter of a marchant there. He thus had a love for the Mahā Chaitya at Sanchi and enlarged it by providing a beautiful brightly polished *Chhatra Yashṭi* or umbrella with a post now preserved in pieces in the Sanchi museum.

Barabar Cave Dwellings—Sixteen miles north of Gaya are several granite hills with Buddhist remains. There are three caves in Barabar (=*Pravaragiri*), four in the Nagarjuni group, together known as *Sāt-ghar*. These were the gift of Aśoka and his grand son Daśaratha to the Ājīvaka monks. In Barabar the first is Karṇa-chopar (33½ ft. × 14½ ft. × 6 ft.), the second Sudāmā Cave excavated in the year twelve of Aśoka having two chambers, one circular (19 ft. 11 in. in diameter with a hemispherical domed roof) and an outer apartment (32 ft. 9 in. × 19 ft. 6 in. × 6 ft. 9 in. with a vaulted roof having a total height of 12 ft. 3 in.). Both the roof and walls of the two caves are finished with a bright enamel-like polish. This shows that the basic plan of a Chaitya-Ghara with a rectangular Maṇḍapa and an apse at its inner end was evolved in Aśoka's time which later on received a complex development in the numerous Chaitya Halls about 1200 in number and ranging in date over about a 1000 years.

The third is the Lomas Ṛishi Cave, similar to Sudāmā in the size and arrangement of the two chambers, but the interior of the circular roof has been left rough and both the floor and the roof of the outer apartment remain unfinished, the straight wall being highly polished. The most important feature is the doorway, a rectangular opening with sloping jambs and beautified by an overhanging entrance porch, carved with ornamental features possessing not only the perfection of articing skill but also detailed architectural design which provided the norm for the façades (*ghar-mukha*) of the rock-cut caves. On the top of it is the finial (*stūpikā*) with the

front arch under it supported on two huge sloping door-jambs and showing the ends of the beams of the roof. The lower ends of the arch and the upper half of the jambs were held together by three cross bolts on eaeh side. Under the arch are a pair of concentric lunettes, the upper one decorated with lattice work (*vātāyana*) and the lower filled with a row of exquisitely carved elephants paying homage to the Stūpa. All the above elements although carved in stone have been inspired by wooden prototypes in which centuries of experience had accumulated both for details of architecture and careful sculpture as well as ornamentation. The high polish combined with sharply chiselled carving and the perfect preservation make it look as if it is the work of today and its beauty so attractive that it looks like an adorned mantle round a lady's face.

The Gopi cave in the Nagarjuni group (44 ft. × 19 ft. × 10 ft.) is like a tunnel in plan, with two apsidal ends and a vaulted roof, excavated in the time of Aśoka's grandson Daśaratha and proving the continuity of Aśokan tradition in later times.

Aśokan Pillars—The cream of Aśokan art consists of his monolithic stone pillars with imposing capitals, which bespeak not only artistic excellence combined with technical skill but also much originality of thought on the part of the emperor. Under the twofold scheme as explained above, of marking the sacred spots of Buddhism and the centres and boundaries of Madhya Deśa, Aśoka erected many pillars of which a full catalogue would be helpful to obtain a complete picture of his art, but all the pillars do not seem to have survived.

Fa-Hien (399-413 A.D.) noticed only six pillars and Yuan Chwang (629-645 A.D.) who travelled more extensively, observed fifteen of them; but they seem to have missed quite a lot for the actual number now discovered exceeds what they have recorded. Of the six seen by Fa-Hien two stood on each side of the door of the *Jetavana Vihāra* at Śrāvastī, one with a wheel and the other with a Bull as capital; one at Sāṅkāśya, erected behind the monastery, 50 (sic. 30) cubits high, with a lion on the top of it, shining and transparent, as it were, of lapis lazuli; the fourth, an inscribed one, on the way to Vaiśālī from Kuśīnagara (most probably the Lauriā-Araraj pillar) bearing Pillar-Edicts (1-6); the fifth at Pāṭaliputra, 30 cubits high bearing an inscription saying: Aśoka made a gift of Jambudvīpa to the *Saṅgha* and then redeemed it from them with money, repeating it three times, from which the pillar became known as the Jambudvīpa Pillar; the sixth also at Pāṭaliputra, more than 30 ft. high, with a lion capital and erected by Aśoka to mark the building of a city named *Ne-Le* and with an inscription recording the year and circumstances of the city's foundations. The Jambudvīpa Pillar appears to be the same as found

to the south of Kumrahar village near old Pāṭaliputra, only two large fragments of it being discovered. Of the second Pāṭaliputra Pillar Mukherjee found innumerable fragments to the north of Mauryan palace and it is inferred that the pillar was destroyed by fire.

We now pass on to Yuan Chwang who mentions distinctly no less than fifteen pillars as having been set up by Aśoka :—

(i) Kapittha Pillar (same as Sāṅkāśya) of a "lustrous violet colour" and very hard, with a crouching *lion* (*sic*, elephant) on the top facing the stairs of the Stūpa, both built by Aśoka, the shaft of the pillar having quaintly carved figures on each side (Watters, i. 334).

(ii and iii) Śrāvastī Pillars : "At the east gate of the Jetavana Vihāra were two stone pillars, one on each side of the entrance; these, which were 70 ft. high, had been erected by Aśoka. The pillar on the left side was surmounted by a sculptured wheel and that on the right side by an Ox". (ib. 1.383).

(iv) Pillar near Kapilavastu erected in front of a Stūpa of the previous Buddha Krakuchhanda, with a carved lion on the top and an account of his *Parinirvāṇa* engraved on it, and the whole being about 30 ft. high, (ib. 2.5).

(v) Kanakamuni commemorative pillar near Kapilavastu, above 20 ft. high crowned by a lion and inscribed with the record of Kanakamuni's decease (ib. 2.6). This is definitely the same as the Aśokan column at Niglīvā on the north-east side of Kapilavastu bearing an inscription about the enlargement of the Stūpa and the erection of the *Śilā-thabha*, the latter event in the 20th year of his reign (c. 250 BC, Hultzsch, CII. 1. 165).

(vi) Pillar in Lumbinī Garden (modern Rummindeī) "with the figure of a horse on the top" which Yuan Chwang saw broken in the middle by lightning. He does not mention the inscription but the Fang-Chih refers to it as connected with the Buddha's birth. This is the famous Aśokan Pillar to which he gave the highest honour amongst his similar monuments as 'it marked the spot of the birth place of the Buddha (*hida Buddhe jāte Śākya muni ti*). So the emperor came to this spot, paid homage to it, raised a pillar (*Silāthabhe usapāpite*) and built a railing carved in stone.'

(vii) Pillar at Kuśīnagara, being the *Nirvāṇa* Pillar, with an inscription recording the circumstances of Buddha's decease (not yet discovered), (ib. 2. 28). Kuśīnagara is modern Kassiyā near Bhavasār-ghāṭ at the confluence of Hiraṇyavatī (Gaṇḍaka) and Achiravatī (Little Rāptī) rivers.

(viii) Another pillar at Kuśīnagara marking the site of the division of the Buddha's relics among the eight claiments ; not discovered (ib. 2. 42).

(ix) A pillar on the way to Sārnāth identified by V. A. Smith with the pillar known as Lāṭ Bhairo in the compound of the Sanskrit University. This was smashed during a riot in 1908. It was "of polished green stone, clear and lustrous as a mirror in which the reflection of the Buddha was constantly visible (ib. 2. 48).

(x) Pillar at Sārnāth, "above 70 ft. high", which had the softness of jade and of dazzling brightness" ; erected at the spot at which the Buddha, having obtained enlightenment, first preached his religion (ib. 2. 50). There is discrepancy in the height estimated by Yuan Chwang, for the total height is calculated to have been about $49\frac{1}{2}$ ft. This is the well known *Mahā-Dharma-Chakra* Pillar discovered by Oertel.

(xi) A Pillar surmounted by a lion in front of an Aśokan Stūpa at Mahāśāla where Yuān Chwāng saw a Nārāyaṇa temple with halls and terraces beautifully adorned and with sculptured stone images in the highest style of art. An epigraph on the pillar stated how the Buddha here subdued and converted a certain *Yaksha* (ib. 2.60). There was an Aśokan Stūpa here in front of which the stone pillar was raised as was the practice of Aśoka to combine the two monuments.

(xii) Pillar at Vaiśālī about 50 ft. high, surmounted by a lion, standing by the side of a Stūpa erected by Aśoka. Cunningham identified this with the uninscribed Aśokan pillar at the village of Bakhirā, or more properly Kolhuā, (ASR, 1903-4, p. 88).

(xiii) Pillar at Pāṭaliputra about 30 ft. high, same as the Jumbudvīpa Pillar of Fa-Hien (Ib. 2. 93). Fragments of this pillar have been found.

(xiv) A second pillar at Pāṭaliputra, some tens of feet high, marking Asoka's hellish prison named *Ramaṇīya-Bandhana.*

(xv) Pillar at Rājagṛiha, beside a Stūpa near the Kalandaka-Nivāpa or tank, 50 ft. high, with an elephant capital and inscribed with a record relating to the foundation of the Stūpa. (Ib. 2. 162).

PILLARS FOUND UP TO NOW—Up to now the following Aśokan pillars have been discovered : Sārnāth (with a capital of four lions), Sānchī (capital with four lions), Rāmpurvā (with lion capital), again Rampurvā (bull-capital, uninscribed), Lauriā Nandangarh (with lion capital), Lauriā Ararāj, Allahabad (probably removed by Akbar from Kauśāmbī), Kosam (uninscribed but with Mauryan polish), Rummindeī, Niglīvā, Bakhirā (Vaiśālī, with lion capital), Saṅkisā (uninscribed, with a lion capital) and two pillars at Delhi removed by Sultan Firoz Tughlak in 1356, of which one originally stood at Meerut and the other at Topra in Ambala district.

Besides these fourteen pillars, ten inscribed and four uninscribed, the following more recent finds may be added to this :

(i) Fragment of bull capital found in Sadargali, Patna.

(ii) Loin capital in Patna Museum with Mauryan polish, acanthus leaf, a crude example. It was found at Masadh village in Arrah district.

(iii) Capital with four addorsed bulls in Patna Museum, having a socket in the centre above, most probably for fixing a *Dharma-chakra*, bearing bright Mauryan polish.

Besides the above, a fragmentary capital was found by Shri Amarnath in Basti district and other fragments were acquired for the Lucknow Museum. It is reported that some pillar fragments were recovered by the Department of Archaeology, Jaipur.

Amongst older records of finds, P. Mukherji reported the discovery of an Aśokan pillar which was again covered up (this is the same as the pillar with Bull capital found in Sadargali, Patna). Mukherji claims to have found six Aśokan pillars at Pāṭaliputra including one large capital with abacus 3 ft. 7½ in diameter.

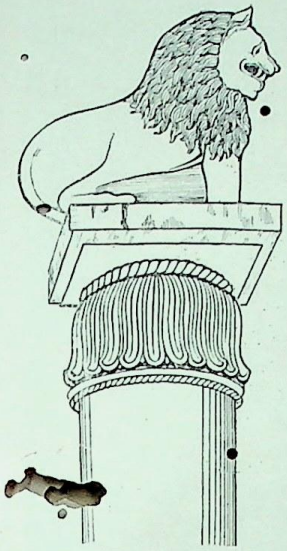
The sculptures on the capitals comprise the four great animals, viz. Lion, Elephant, Bull and Horse, which are the same as depicted on the abacus of Sārnāth capital.[1]

The pillars consist of a long tapering shaft ranging from about 40′ to 50′ in length, and a capital generally in the form of an animal, fixed on the top of the shaft, both being carved out of single blocks of stone. The pillars represent the highest skill of the Mauryan artists by their noble stature, pleasing proportions, high finish, gloss-like polish and above all, by the magnificence of the capitals executed with skilled mastery of long training. If to this is added the depth of meaning that goes with the symbolism of the capitals, we have something which is unique in the entire field of Indian art activity, and to which there is hardly a parallel in world art. A study of the style of these capitals reveals some kind of chronological sequence as follows :—

1. the earlist one is the Lion-capital at Bakhirā ; followed by the Elephant-capital at Saṅkisā.

2. the next stage is represented by the Rampurvā Bull-capital followed closely by the Lion-capital of Lauriā Nandangarh ; in both of these, the earlier

1. For a complete inventory of Aśokan columns and their capitals, see V.A. Smith. The Monolithic Pillars or Columns of Aśoka, *ZDMG* Vol. LXV, 1911, pp. 221-240.



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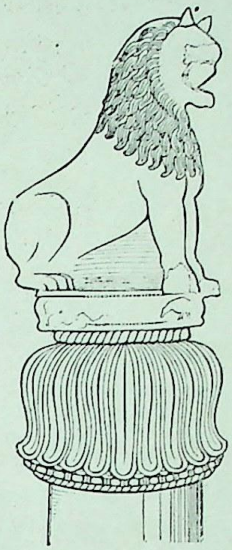

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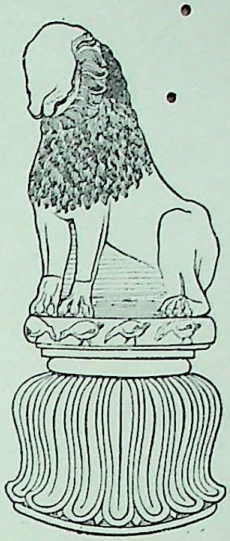

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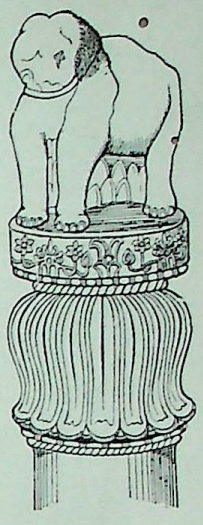

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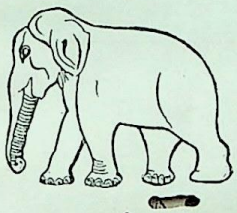

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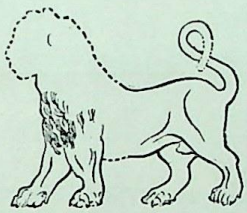

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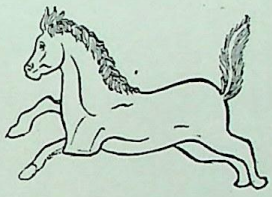

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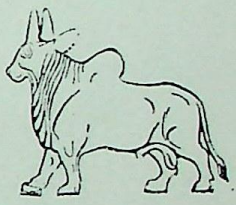

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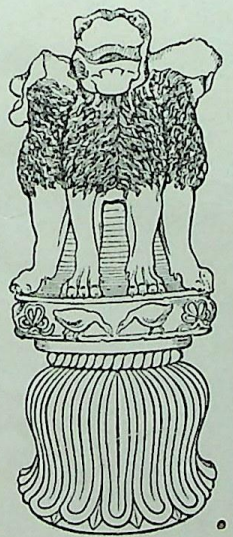

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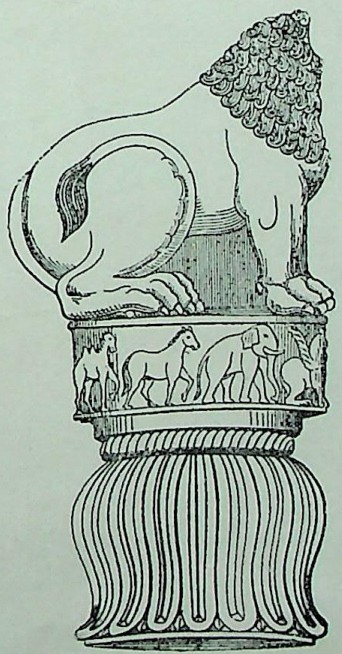

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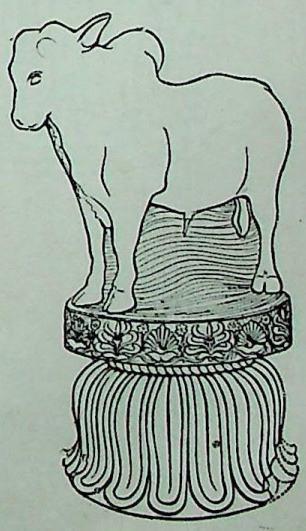

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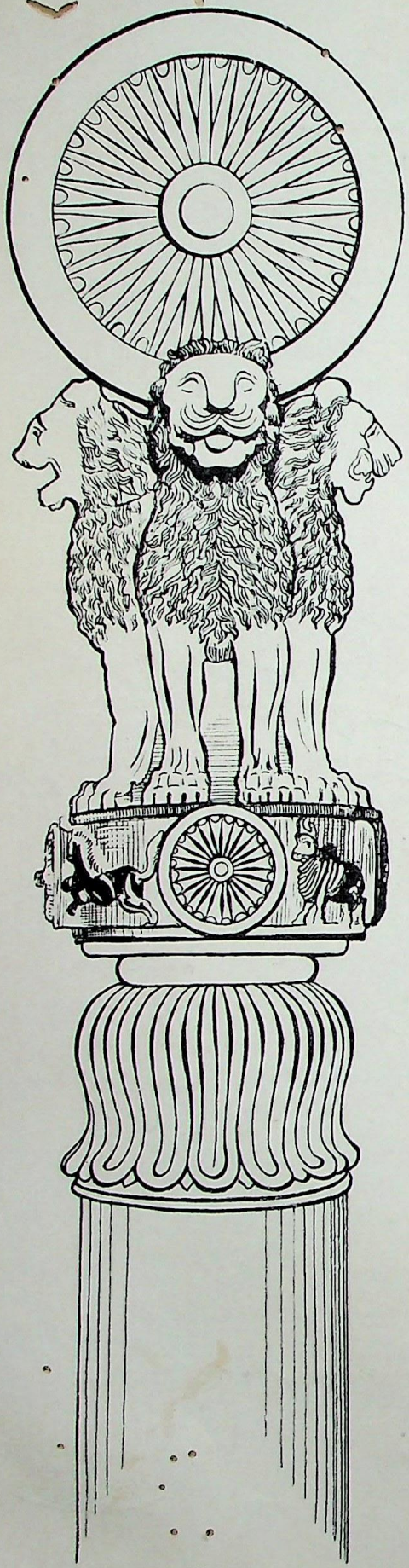
Fig. 46



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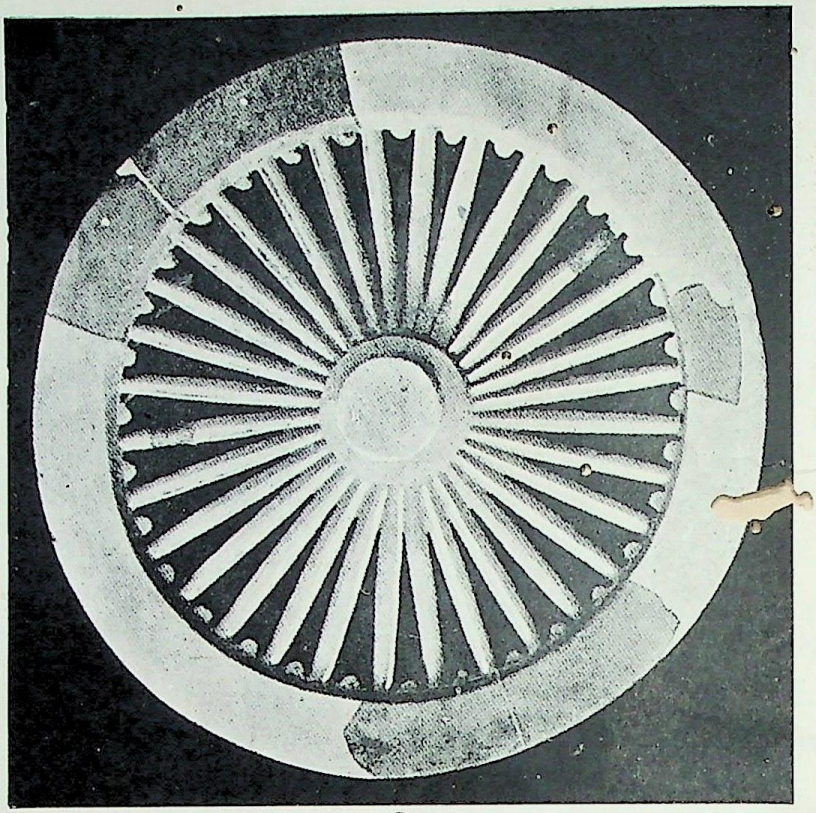

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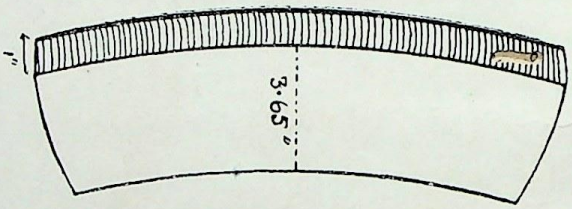

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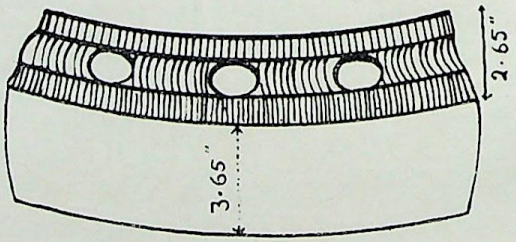

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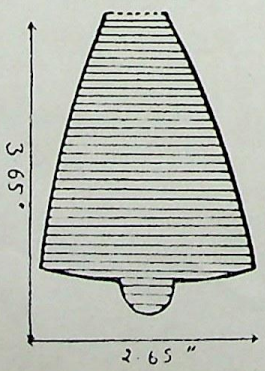

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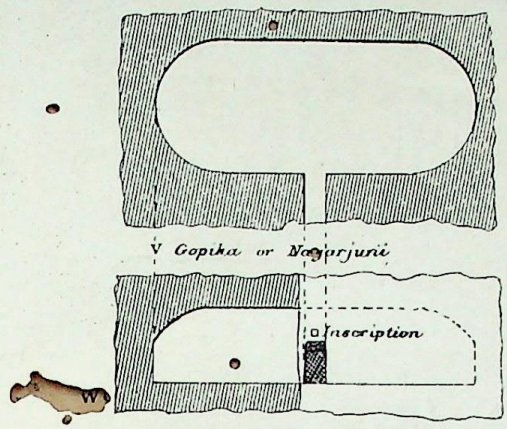
Fig. 46



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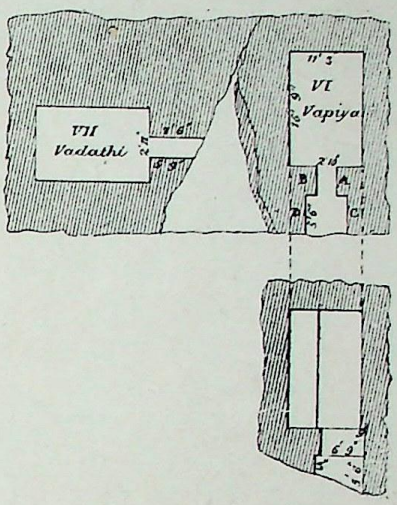

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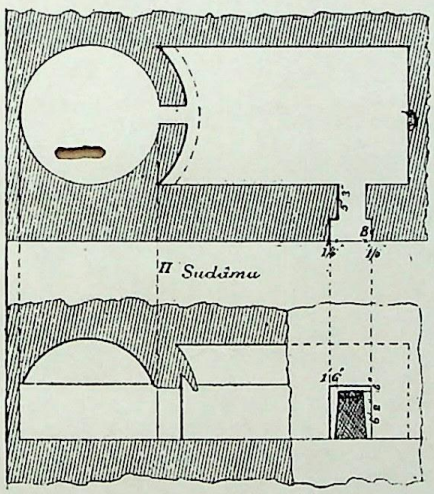

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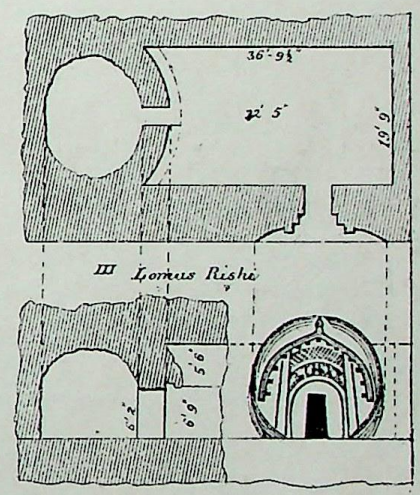

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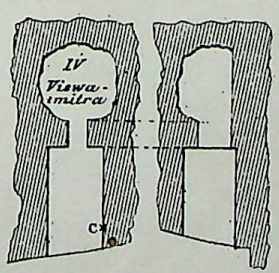

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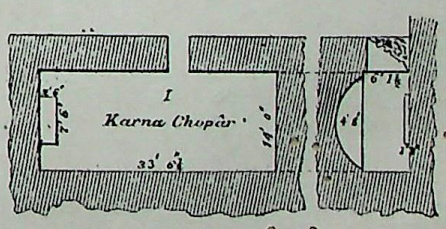

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Fig. 48

PLATE XX

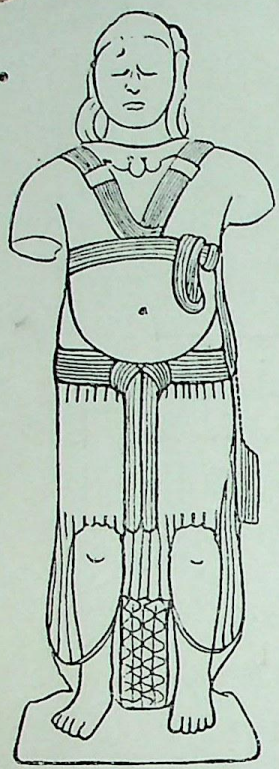

Fig. 50

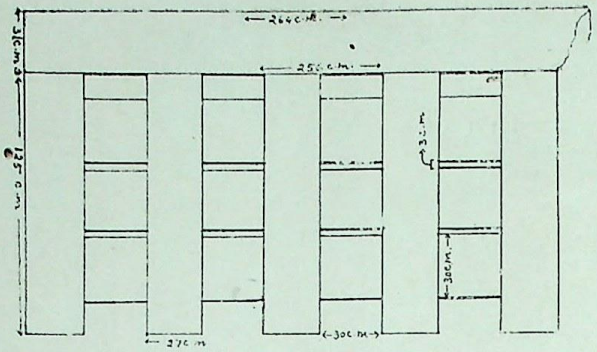

Fig. 47

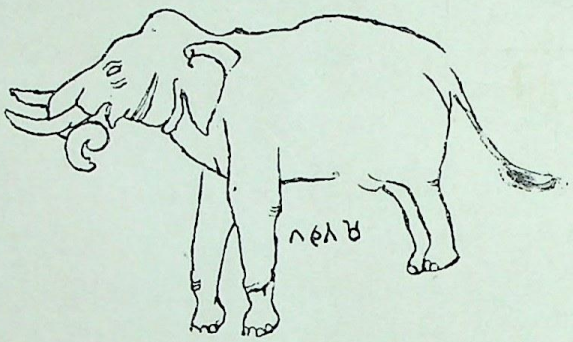

Fig. 49

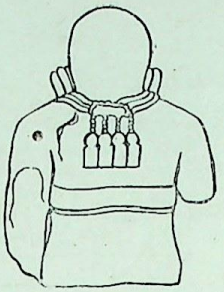

Fig. 51

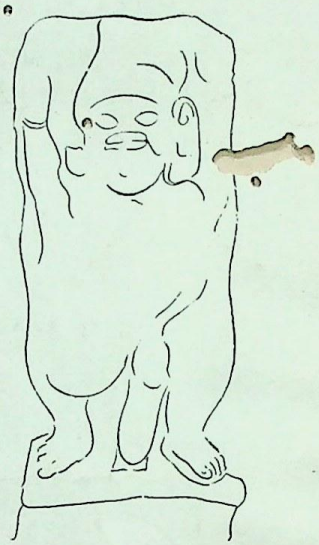

Fig. 53

Fig. 52

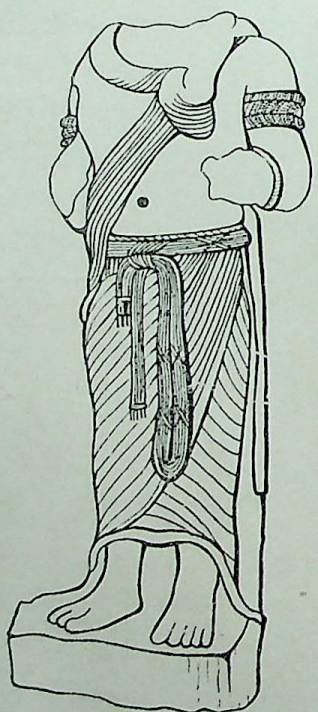

Fig. 50 x

Fig. 50 y

Fig. 50 z

clumsiness gives place to a dignity of form, naturalness and proper harmony in the different elements of the composition.

3. the final stage is represented by the Lion-capital of Rāmpurwā and the Lion-capital at Sanchi, following closely the Lion-capital of the pillar at Sarnath,

THE BAKHIRĀ LION-CAPITAL :—The shaft of the pillar is ponderous and somewhat dwarfish in proportion ; the lion figure is clumsy and crude in style, the animal being uncomfortably balanced on the abacus, the attitude being wooden and artificial. No doubt the sculptor has handled the monolithic mass, still he misses to evolve an ascending rhythm in the several parts of the pillar as distinguished by the best of Aśokan art. [Fig. 46 a].

THE ELEPHANT-CAPITAL AT SAṄKISĀ :—The capital is composed of three parts, viz. an elephant on the top, abacus in the middle and a vase with lotus below. The decoration on the abacus consists of the honeysuckle (*muchukunda*) flanked by stems with lotus flowers and buds and the whole alternating with a *triratna* symbol, somewhat conventionalised. The drum is framed on the lower side by reel-and-bead design. The abacus and the inverted lotus are much more improved. [Fig. 46 b].

THE RĀMPURWĀ BULL-CAPITAL :—It consists of three component parts, viz. an animal sculpture at the top, a round decorated abacus in the middle and an inverted lotus below. The young bull with modelled muscles plastered on its body is a specimen of natural beauty of form in Indian animal sculpture. It stands gracefully poised on its pedestal. The artist has perfect mastery in rendering the vertical rhythm of the shaft and the three parts of the capital. [Fig. 46 c].

LION-CAPITAL OF NANDANGARH :—This capital consists of a sejant lion, a round drum, decorated with a row of *Haṁsas*, like that on the Rāmpurwā lion-capital and finally, an inverted lotus below. On the upper portion of the inverted petals is a cable design and on the lower a double zone of reel-and-cord. The figure of the lion is vigorous and full of dynamic strength, still marked by a somewhat stylised expression. [Fig. 46 d].

RĀMPURWĀ LION-CAPITAL :—It is similar to the lion-capital at Lauriā, consisting of the same three elements, lion, row of *Haṁsas* and inverted lotus. The lion figure is naturally poised on its base and all its parts possess an inherent quality of symmetrical execution, perhaps even better than the Sarnath lions. [Fig. 46 e].

SARNATH LION-CAPITAL :—This is the famous monument in which Aśokan art has reached its highest perfection. It is a sculpture of monumental planning, rich in composition, of rare harmony in the execution of its lateral and vertical parts. Its

elements conceived singly to face four directions and as an integrated whole, show the highest skill of the sculptor's art. Its lines of composition in segments and diagonals and verticals appear to have been conceived and controlled by a great master with rare assurance and with clarity and self-confidence. Its greatest virtue lies in the meaning imported to its symbolism with which we will deal later.

The capital once crowned the shaft of the pillar about 50′ high, but due to some natural accident, it fell down, fortunately escaping with only minor bruises. [Fig. 46 f].

COMPONENT PARTS :—Analysed on the basis of form, the whole monument is comprised of the following components :

(1) Undressed foundation-block which supports the shaft, and into which a portion of the shaft is inserted.

(2) The shaft (*Stambha-yashṭi*) or the tall tapering column.

(3) *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa* with a large *Padma-kośa* shown in the form of overflowing inverted petals (*Nīlotpala-patra*).

(4) Round drum or abacus (*Aṇḍa or Dik-Maṇḍala or Chakravāla*) carved with Four Great Animals (*Mahā Ājāneya Paśu*) and four Chakras.

(5) Four addorsed lions.

(6) The Great Wheel (*Mahā-chakra*)[1]. [Fig. 46 g].

We find that the tradition of these six components of Sarnath Lion capital was of great antiquity handed down from the Vedic period. The tall shaft is the *Stambha*, a Vedic pillar considered to be the support of the world, abode of all the gods, raised aloft by the Creator as the World Axis (*Axis Mundi, Yasmin stabdhvā Prajāpatir lokānt sarvān adhārayat, Sakmbham taṁ brūhi*, AV. 10. 7. 7). The Yūpa in the Yajña was the type of that pillar and so also the *Sthūṇa* in the burial mound. From the conception of the *Skambha* (Pillar) as identical with Brahman or Prajāpati we find an expansion of idea to the Yūpa of the Yajña, and to the Śmaśāna Yūpa or Chaitya Yūpa, all of them leading to a universal cult of pillar worship regarding the *Skambha* as a deity. The pillar at Lauriā Nandangarh is still worshipped as *Laur Bābā* and the one at Besnagar *Khām Bābā*. For about three thousand years

(1) Measurements of the Sarnath Lion-capital :—

Height of the stump in situ 6 ft. 8 in., total height including all the fragments or broken pieces of the shaft 37 ft., ht. of the lotus 2 ft., ht. of the abacus 1 ft. 1½ in., diameter of the round drum 2′-10″, ht. of the Lions 3 ft. 9 in., ht. of the Dharma-Chakra 2 ft. 8 in., internal diameter of the Dharma-Chakra 2 ft. 5 in. to 2 ft. 1 in., width of the rim of the Wheel 3. 65 in., thickness of the rim varies from 2. 65 in. at the inner end to 1 inch at the outer end.

Indian workmen were making long wooden pillars for religious purposes and the question for Aśokan sculpture was just a change of material.

The pillars infront of shrines were known as *Prāsāda-stambha* and infront of rock-cut Chaitya halls as *Kīrti-stambha*, where *Kīrti* means a rock excavation. A Yaksha shrine or Buddhist Stūpa came to be associated with a pillar as shown by the Sarnath and Sanchi pillars and by the description of the Nikumbhilā Chaitya in Lañkā which had a large pillar by its side. The tall stature of the shafts (*Varshman*) and their being erected as banners of sacrifice (*Adhvarasya ketu*) are both mentioned in the Ṛigveda (RV. III. 8. 3, II. 8. 8). Such pillars were raised for welfare of the whole community (*Mahate Saubhagāya* RV. III. 8. 2.).

The next element in the upward form (*Ūrdhva Chhanda*) of the Sarnath pillar is the *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa* covered with inverted foliage.

There is some controversy about the nature and nomenclature of this motif. Western scholars generally interpret it as a bell and regard the parts as bell-shaped or campaniform. There are several cogent objections in accepting this interpretation :-

(1) In a bell design there is hardly any place for the overflowing conspicuous leaves which form the decoration of the exterior surface.

(2) The smaller sepals—even upto now the traditional artists in rendering the flowers depict both the petals (*Pañkhaḍī*) and sepals (*Bachheḍī*).

(3) If we explain the motif as a bell there is no point in the corded or rope design or plain moulding which we see in the neck of the object. It is only in the case of the pot and foliage or vase and flower motif that we get a consistent explanation of these various decorative features.

Firstly, the idea of *Pūrṇaghaṭa* or *Maṅgala Kalaśa* had been known since the time of the Ṛigveda for which continuous literary evidence is available. The Buddhist literature refers to it as *Puṇṇaghaṭa*. More than literature actual religious as well as art tradition is full with this motif of the *Maṅgala Kalaśa*. It is universal in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. It is popular with all ranks of people, both rich and poor. There is practically no festive occasion in which the Pūrṇaghaṭa is not installed either as a religious symbol or for beautifying purpose. This can really be said to have been a universal, accessible and readily understood of all symbols. Its auspicious character is so obvious and patent as hardly to need any argument. Moreover, there is another fact to be considered. A motif does not suddenly appear in art and disappear without leaving any trace in subsequent art. It is not an exotic phenomenon which is introduced for a while and then discarded. It is rather a natural thing which grows from inside the tradition and is the fruit of an intelligent acceptance by the people.

Its appearance in art in subsequent years is linked in a perfect manner with the tradition that follows. In the case of the *Pūrṇaghaṭa* motif this condition is perfectly satisfied, for in the couple of centuries after the Mauryan art under Aśoka we find this motif forming a very natural element of pillar decoration in the Buddhist art at Bharhut, Sanchi, Karle, Kanherī, etc.

That it was intended by the Mauryan artists to be a *Pūrṇaghaṭa* is made certain by the form of this motif as interpreted by their Śuṅga successors on the railing pillars found at Sarnath itself, e. g. pillars No. D (A1) and D (A7) illustrate two *Chakra-stambhas* in which the shafts are inserted inside a *Pūrṇaghaṭa* at the lower end and are topped by another *Pūrṇaghaṭa* with overflowing leaves.

On the round drum (*Aṇḍa-phalaka*) are carved four smaller *Dharma Charkas* and Four Noble Animals (*Mahā Ājāneya Paśu*), viz. Elephant, Bull, Lion and Horse. The four animals have a long tradition from the Indus Valley right up to our own times and over a wide area covering India, Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Tibet. They are depicted marching in a file on a prismatic seal of the Indus Valley from Mohenjo-daro, on the moon stones in Ceylon belonging to the Gupta period, in a Rajasthani Painting of the 18th century preserved in National Museum and on a *Kanthā* cloth from Bengal (19 century) now in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan. In the Buddhist conception of the Anavatapta Lake they are the guardians of four outlets which are the source of four great rivers. The Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa includes them amongst auspicious objects assembled for the coronation of Rāma and Keśavadāsa (17th century) places them on the four portals of Rāma's palace. We have been able to trace about 40 references to them both in art and literature and there may be still more showing that they formed part of popular consciousness and the belief in their sacred character belonged to the Buddhists, Jainas and Hindus alike. The four smaller *Chakras* on the abacus face the four cardinal points and we find their true interpretation as the wheel of a Chakravartī king rolling in four directions upto the ends of the earth. Indeed, the four-fold pattern of creation as vitalised by the principle of Dharma of an ideal Chakravartī king is exemplified in the eight representations on the drum.

The four lions above the abacus are illustrative of the royal power of a Chakravartī emperor like Aśoka himself. The Buddha also combined in himself the two ideals, viz. that of a Chakravartī and a Yogin and both of them are juxtaposed in the Lion-capital.

On the head of the lions was a Mahā Dharma-Chakra fixed by a tenon in a socket in the centre of the lion-heads. It had 32 spokes but only half a dozen fragments bearing the same Mauryan polish have been preserved which allow the original wheel to be reconstructed. We have ample evidence in the various traditions of Indian art

and literature that the great wheel in this position was a symbol of deep meaning standing for Brahmāṇḍa Chakra, Bhava Chakra, Kāla Chakra, Dharma Chakra, Sudarśana Chakra, etc. The Jaina art in Mathura shows several Chakra pillars and the art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhagaya and Amarāvatī is full of them. In Hindu tradition the Perfect Wheel (*Vritta Chakra*) was conceived as a symbol of Vishṇu and of the revolving Wheel of Time even in the Ṛigveda (RV. I. 155. 6, I. 164. 11-13).

All authorities are agreed that the Sarnath lion capital represents the perfection of Mauryan art and testifys to the undisputed mastery of technical execution as attained by the Mauryan stone-cutters. Sir John Marshall considers it as the finest carving that India has yet produced and unsurpassed by anything of its kind in the ancient world. Dr. V. A. Smith has observed, "the skill of the stone-cutter may be said to have attained perfection and to have accomplished the task which would perhaps be found beyond the powers of the 20th century. Gigantic shafts of hard sand-stone, 30 ft. or 40 ft. in length, were dressed and proportioned with the utmost nicety, receiving a polish which no modern nation knows how to import to the material."

Commenting on the art of the lion-capital Sir John Marshall has observed, "The Sarnath capital, on the other hand, though by no means a masterpiece, is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognizant in the 3rd century B. C., the handiwork of one who had generations of artistic effort and experience behind him. The masterful strength of the crowning lions with their swollen veins and tense muscular development and in the spirited realism of the reliefs below, there is no trace whatever of the imitations of primitive art. So far as naturalism was his aim, the sculptor has modelled the figures direct from nature and has delineated, their form with bold faithful touch, but he has done more than this, he has consciously and of set purpose infused a tectonic conventional spirit in to the four lions, so as to bring them into harmony with the architectural character of the monument. Equally mature is the technique of his relief work. In early Greek sculpture it was the practice to compress the relief between two fixed planes, the original front plane of the statue and the plane of the background. In the reliefs of the Sarnath capital there is no trace, whatever of this process; each and every part of the animal is modelled according to its actual depth without a reference to an ideal front plane, with the result that it presents the appearance almost of a figure in the round which has been cut in half and then applied to the background of the abacus".

THE SANCHI LION-CAPITAL :—The Sanchi lion capital is similar to that of Sarnath consisting of four lions seated back to back, a round abacus with pecking geese like those of Rāmpurwā capital. The treatment is much more conventionalised, perhaps it was later in date than Sarnath capital. [Fig. 46 h].

State Museum, Library, Lko.

MEANING OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE SARNATH LION-CAPITAL :—Several suggestions have been put forward about the meaning of the abacus. Bloch was of the view that they stand for the four gods, Indra, Śiva, Sūrya and perhaps Durgā, whose *Vāhanas* they are and consequently they are meant to indicate the subordination of these gods to Buddha and his Law. This theory, however ingenious has little to support it. Foucher connected them with the four great events of the Buddha's life, the Bull standing for his birth, the Elephant for the conception in the womb of Māyā who saw a great white elephant in her dream, the Horse with the renunciation and the Lion with the Buddha himself as Śākya-Siṁha Daya Ram Sahni suggested that they are connected with the imagery of the four outlets of the Buddhist *Anotatta* lake.

It may be said at the outset that the Sarnath capital is the product of a supreme religious symbolism in which each part is a conscious conception in the aggregate. It also appears that this symbolism was the result of an attempt to illustrate Aśoka's own outlook and philosophy of human relationship.

The grand architect of the idea underlying this capital was Aśoka himself, as exemplified by the following three facts of his outlook on life and administration.

The first fact relates to his close contact with the masses of people which he realised in his own person and also by organised tours of his officers throughout the kingdom. The nature of this mass contact is laid down in one of his edicts—*Jānapada-janasa-dasanasa dhamma-palipuchhā dhammanusathi.*

This, in fact, is the innovation of policy by the emperor aiming at mass contact through direct visits to the people, holding discussions with them on the problems of *Dhamma* or moral life, and finally enlightening them about the new ideas and definition of *Dhamma* as formulated by the emperor. This then announces a new respect for the people, hitherto unknown and unthought of in the ancient annals of the country by any monarch.

The second dominant fact about Aśoka was his paramount position as the emperor of a vast empire (*Mahālaka Vijita*), extending right from Bactria to Mysore and from Saurāshṭra on shore of the western ocean to Kaliṅga on the eastern sea-coast. His authority was unchallenged and almost unparalleled. All that he did was in the capacity of the supreme head of the secular state and also as the spiritual guide, friend and philosopher of the strongly organised church of Buddhism. Whatever the emperor would think, plan and do, the effect of the emperor's power as the supreme ruler of his people would primarily dictate action and had to be taken into account.

The above two factors were shared by other kings also before and after him, but what was unique as a force in shaping the policies of Aśoka was his new outlook of *Dhamma* or the law of moral piety which served as the main spring of his actions. The edicts are eloquent about his ideal of *Dhamma Vijaya* which was a moving passion with him.

These three facts, therefore, demanded adequate expression in the symbolism of art created for him or at his instance by his workmen. If we apply these three ideals to the various parts of the capital, we may readily discover that the crowning *Dharma Chakra* symbolises the policy of *Dharma Vijaya*, the four seated lions represent the majesty and power of the emperor as the supreme ruler of the land. The next constituent part comprising the decoration on the abacus falls in line with the ideal of serving the masses through *Dhamma*. The four animals represent the divinity in the various orders of social organisations and the *Dharma Chakras* illustrate its underlying unity as actually happened in the life of Aśoka. These three orders of reality were integrated and combined into a supreme manifestation of all the resources and availability of the ruler and his kingdom. These three things together represent the emotional integration of the personality of Aśoka himself who dedicated his life and his kingdom to the welfare of his people through the ideal of *Dhamma*.[1]

ORIGIN OF MAURYAN ART :—The question of the origin and the sources of inspiration behind the monuments of Mauryan art is of considerable importance. As is well known there is absence of specimens of monuments representing the several phases of pre-Mauryan art but there is enough evidence in literature to indicate that art in India had a long history even before the Mauryan period. For example, we have literary references to royal palaces built on a thousand pillars (*Sahassa-khambha pāsāda*), assembly halls (*Sabhā, Saṁthāgāra*), pillars (*Thambha, Sthūṇā*), towns (*Pura*) and cities (*Nagara*), gateways (*Gopura, Dvāra*) and city-walls (*Prākāra*), *Stūpas, Chaityas*, railings (*Vedikā*), caves (*Śailaguhā*), temples of gods (*Devagriha, Devāyatana*), images (*Pratimā, Rūpaka*) and to a number of subsidiary crafts such as wood-carving (*Kāshṭha-karma, Takshaṇa*), weaving, lapidary's art (*Maṇikarma, Maṇiśilpa*), jeweller's art (*Suvarṇa-śilpa*), etc.

But the question, which concerns us, directly relates to the origin of such finished art as that of the lion capital of Aśoka, which displays the climax of technical perfection and a complete mastery of the secrets of modelling and carving in the round. The Mauryan polish itself is without any traces of its existence either in the succeeding or preceding periods. What then was the source of the unprecedented artistic activity during the reigns of Chandragupta and Aśoka ? In the words of Sir John Marshall,

1. See my book *Chakradhvaja or the Wheel Flag of India.*

"What is the explanation of the gulf which separates these two sculptures (1) the primitive unifacial image of Parkham, and (2) the richly modelled capital of Sarnath ?" He himself gave an answer to this question, namely, that it was the Achaemenian art of Iran which served as the model for the Mauryan art through the intermediary agencies of the Hellenistic artists of Bactria. Following Senart, he thinks that the Aśokan edicts were inspired by the Achaemenian inscriptions and the Mauryan palace at Pāṭaliputra by the palaces at Susa and Persepolis built by emperor Darius in the hey-day of that most glorious empire of antiquity. According to him it was in Persia that the animal-crowned capitals of pillars were evolved. The smooth shafts of the Mauryan pillars were copied from Persian originals of which specimens are still existent in the plain of Murghat at Istakhr, Naksh-i-Rustum and Persepolis. It was from Persia again that craftsmen of Aśoka learnt to give lustrous polish to stone of which abundant evidence survives at Persepolis and elsewhere. Sir John Marshall believes that the Persian influence came to India through Bactria in which area there were great centres of civilization under the Seleucids with whom political and cultural relations were established by the Indians. He has emphatically stated that the Sarnath capital is alien to Indian ideas in expression and in execution.

We have already seen in the case of the Chandragupta Sabhā that its architectural planning, conception of pillars, wooden roofing and floor and the shining polish were in the true Indian tradition. The testimony of the Greek writers that the Mauryan palace was much superior in all respects to the Achaemenian palaces at Susa and Akhabatana is strong enough to rule out the participation of foreign artists in the building of the palace ; if they were from Iran, they should have done better in their home. The masters who executed the rock-cut caves in the Barabar hills were perfect adepts in the technique of wooden construction, in the matter of flat and vaulted roofs, circular and rectangular halls, doorway, sloping jambs, arched gable façade, beams, and last but not the least, producing the mirror like polish on all the parts of the building. The art was decked by long traditional experience and technical skill practised for thousands of years right from the Vedic time.

It is necessary also to consider the art of the Aśokan columns and capitals as regards the source of their form and idea. As shown above there are five component parts of the typical Mauryan column at Sarnath, viz. (1) *Dharma-chakra* on the pinnacle, (2) four addorsed lions, (3) round drum with four great animals and four *chakras*, (4) the full vase with lotus petals, and (5) the tall shaft. We shall see that each one of these is truly rooted in Indian soil and the entire indigenous tradition stands up as the source which produced the Aśokan columns.

The *Dharma-Chakra* on the top was known from the Vedic time as *Brahma Chakra, Kāla Chakra, Bhava Chakra,* and the whole cosmos was conceived in terms

of the rotating wheel. This was idealised as *Dharma* of the *Chakravartī* rulers to which there is clear testimony in the *Mahāsudassana Sutta* and *Chakkavattī-Sīhanāda Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The seven jewels of an ideal *Chakravartī* include a *Dharma Chakra* also which he sets in motion as the most significant symbol of his righteous sovereignty. No one has ever hinted of any foreign context for the *Dharma Chakra* emblem.

The four addorsed lions symbolise the might of a *Chakravartī* king. It is the power of the State known as *Kshatra* expressed through the lion symbolism as we know that the king was considered to be a tiger or lion in his kingdom and in the coronation ceremony was made to sit on a lion's seat (*Simhāsana*). The four lions of the capital truly form a *Simhāsana* of the most perfect type which support the moral order of the kingdom.

The round drum, an essential part of the capital is carved with four *chakras* facing the cardinal points and four animals between them. The wheel symbol again is a fourfold replica of the surmounting *Dharma-chakra*, and the idea of a *Chakravartī* ruler, rolling in four directions is best typified here, e. g. in the description of Sudassana and Māndhātā. The four animals and the four *chakras* taken together give a complete picture of the *Anotapta* or Mānasarovara lake which was a cosmogonical concept accepted both by the Brāhmanical and Buddhist traditions. This motif was painted in the Mahā Ummagga palace as stated in the Jātaka of that name and there is no doubt that the idea of the *Anotapta* was the same as that of the lake of Brahmā, with four faces, four streams and every thing connected there with conforming to a fourfold pattern which is the basic plan of the cosmos as accepted by the entire religious tradition in India. The presence of the Four Great Animals (*Mahā Ājāneya Paśu*) both together as at Sarnath and separately as on the other Aśokan columns, is not an isolated phenomenon of Mauryan times but has a history throughout from the Indus Valley right up to the nineteenth century, both in art and literature. There is thus no question of any foreign influence or borrowing of the figures on the round abacus.

The bone of contension is the Full Vase on the top of the shaft with long over-flowing leaves, the so-called *bell* of Iranian origin. We have seen above by an analysis of the several elements that it is impossible by any stretch of imagination to convert the clear represention of a full vase into a bell. The short base under the *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa* and the cordage round its neck are entirely irrational in the case of a bell, whereas they are full of meaning for a *Mekhalī Pūrṇa-ghaṭa*, i. e. a Full Vase adorned with a necking or a girdle. The long lotus leaves covering the outside of the Vase and oozing from its mouth have entirely no meaning for a *bell*. Of the numerous

campaniform designs carved in Indian art there is not one with fluted exterior much less with any semblance of petals. Secondly, there is absolutely no relevance of a *bell* in that position on a pillar whereas the *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa* is put both on the top and base of sanctified pillars throughout the country upto this day. The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* or *Pūrṇa Kalaśa* is mentioned in the Ṛigveda, Atharvaveda and in the Jaina and Buddhist literature and has been a familiar object of art decoration from the earliest times up to the present day, taken by itself and in association with a pillar the Full Vase with leaves is an essential part of Indian culture and there can be no important religious ceremony even today without the *Pūrṇa-Ghaṭa* and the pillar. The surest testimony that this component part is a vase and not a *bell* comes from those artists who continued this decorative motif in the Śuṅga and Kushāṇ periods, and whose interpretation of the symbol should be accepted as authoritative. At Sarnath itself there are a few Śuṅga railing pillars on which the Aśokan capital is represented showing unmistakably the Full Vase on the top of the shaft.

The fifth element is the tall shaft called *Yashṭi, Lakuṭa, Stambha, Skambha* etc. As shown above such pillars or long shafts were known and executed in wood from the Vedic times. They were known as *Yūpas* in Yajña but the *Skambha Sūkta* of the Atharvaveda goes much further that the pillar as the support of the universe enjoyed the status of a deity, all the other *Devas* having their support on the pillar which was ceremoniously raised aloft as the symbol of universal prosperity. That there was an established cult of the pillar, of which *Indra Yashṭi* was a form, is shown by several representations in art in which men and women are worshipping the pillar by circumambulating it.

In speaking of the foreign influences on the form and style we cannot forget to note the differences between the pillars and capitals of Achaemenian art and Mauryan art. Here are some of those features :—

(1) Stone columns of the Mauryan hall at Pāṭalipurta (*Chandragupta Sabhā*) do not show any capitals where as the pillars in the palace-hall at Persepolis are provided with figured capital.

(2) The Iranian pillars stand either on bell-shaped bases or on plain circular mouldings, whereas the independent Mauryan columns had no base at all. Secondly the bell-form used in the base of the Persian pillars is a part of the capital in the Mauryan columns and produces an altogethor different aesthetic effect.

(3) In form and appearance the so-called Mauryan bell is long way off from the Iranian bell. The latter consists of a ring of petals or reels on the upper end, but has no bulge in the middle portion from which the so-called Mauryan bell derives so much beauty. Moreover the so-called Mauryan bell is made to approximate as nearly

as possible the Indian traditional designs of pot and foliage (*Pūrṇa Ghaṭa*) rendered in a stylised manner. The *Pūrṇa Ghaṭa* motit was known from the time of Ṛigveda. Moreover it was associated with Indian pillars made of wood both to make it look more beautiful as well as to preserve it from decay. A plain circular pillar fragment made of wood resembling the plain shaft of the Aśokan pillar has been actually found in the mound at Lauriā Nandagarh.

(4) The shaft of the Iranian columns is fluted in all cases except in the façade of the tombs or the Nechropolis (*Śma'āna*) and also the single column that remains from the palace of Cyrus (*Kurush*). This latter pillar dates from the time when the Iranian art had not evolved its classical forms. The style of the plain unfluted columns was discarded by the Achaemenians themselves. It would be wrong to suggest that the Mauryan sculptors ignoring the fluted shaft of the time of Darius went back in search for their modles to the primitive designs of Cyrus. In the case of the pillars of Nechropolis they form part of the rock-cut tombs of the time of Darius and Yorks. In these tombs the shaft was kept plain because the vaults stood at a considerable height above the ground and if the pillars were made fluted it would have further reduced the columns and diverted them of a frank and clear aspect, if viewed from a distance. The Persian sculptors modified the form as the Greeks often did in similar cases. We may thus justifiably search for the original model of the plain Mauryan columns in such wooden pillars as found at Lauriā Nandangarh. In the early Buddhist literature, as well as in the Epics, there are references to pillars standing independently in religious buildings and public places. Aśoka himself has mentioned the existence of such pillars (Rūpnath Rock Edict, Sasaram R. E., Delhi-Topra, VII). Similarly with respect to the animal capitals on the top of the Mauryan pillars, it was an ancient practice of providing pillars with animals as shown by such references as *Garuḍadhvaja, Vṛishabhdhvaja, Makaradhvaja,* etc. Therefore the upper component part of the Mauryan capitals fitted very well with the literary and artistic traditions of pre-Mauryan India.

(5) There is one more difference of a conspicuous character. The Achaemenian shaft when erected independently is made up of several segments while the Mauryan pillars are monolithic. The Persian columns show the requirements of stone while the Mauryan pillar is connected with the originals of timber construction which were made of entire logs of wood.

(6) The Persian and the Mauryan capitals also show marked difference. The former are crowned with a cluster of stylised palm leaves and consists of two human-headed bulls or lions seated back to back, or by an inverted cup and the whole shows projecting double volutes. These elements do not find exact counterparts in the Mauryan capitals which show animal figures but not human-headed and the

so-called bell form is covered by a stylised lotus petals. The crowning abacus and its decoration as found in Mauryan capitals are absent in Achaemenian art.

(7) Lastly, the Persian columns were introduced to form part of elaborate architectural construction. But the Aśokan pillars were intended to serve as independent monuments and designed to produce their effect as such. They are simpler, more harmonious and give a better feeling of stability, dignity and strength. The Mauryan column is not doubt an origional construction of indigenous art of that period.

The bright lustrous polish is a distinctive feature of Mauryan (Aśokan) art. We should, however, remember that specimens of pre-Mauryan art in stone have not survived and it is difficult to be positive on this point whether this polish was produced in India for the first time in the Mauryan period. We should draw attention to literary evidences which refer to such polish.

The bright polish on the Mauryan pillars and other objects of art and architecture has engaged the attention of scholars and some opine, as Spooner, that it was borrowed from Iran where its existence is undisputed ; but it cannot be conveniently forgotten that the antiquity of bright polish is much greater in India than in Iran. We have already referred to a dozen terms from the Mahābhārata showing the enthusiasm in India about such a polish. But much older than the Sabhā Parva and more authentic is the testimony of the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra which enjoins the production of such polish (*ślakshṇī karaṇaiḥ ślahkalnī-kurvanti*, ĀSS. 15. 3. 15) and even gives a recipe for doing it on ceramic ware (ĀSS. 15. 3. 16), its main feature being rubbing with abrasives and some lubricant. We know from the history of Indian pottery of three successive periods, viz. (i) Ochre-coloured Ware, (ii) Painted Grey Ware (c. 1200 B.C. 600 B.C.) and (iii) Northern Black Polished Ware (600 B.C.–200 B. C.). In this series the third class of pottery is found all over India at Mauryan and pre-Mauryan sites and the ware has a highly lustrous polish, black, violet or variegated. This shows that in the history of country's art there was a period of several centuries in which there was a widespread movement for preparing a glistening mirror like surface on the articles in popular use. The reference to it in the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra agrees quite well both with the antiquity and the prevalence of the popular fondness for the glistening lustrous polish. The Bṛihat Kalpa Sūtra Bhāshya (Vol. 1, *gāthās*, 471-472) also refer to this polish on a special kind of pottery ware which cannot be anything else except the N. B. P. Ware. In the beginning the use of such luxurious pottery was forbidden to the Jaina monks but the rules were later on relaxed. Thus we have firm proof that the technical skill of producing this polish was known not only in the Pre-Mauryan times but also before the Achaemenian art was born as shown by Āpastamba Śrauta

Sūtra. Moreover this was not the prerogative of Mauryan court art only, but the use of such polish was much more broadbased and employed on many classses of art objects. For example, on semi-precious stone beads, on crystal reliquary from the Piprahvā Stūpa, on the two Yaksha statues from Pāṭaliputra and also on the Yakshī statue from the Dīdārganj and the Tīrthaṅkara torsos from Lohānipur, the latter two also from Patna. It cannot be admitted that any one of these was produced under court patronage ; but this kind of polish was a part of the art style of the period and was in common use. We also find it on several Mauryan heads found at Sarnath.

The antiquity of evidence about this polish and its prevalence as a movement for about 400 years makes one thing that its commerce was just the other way, viz. it was taken from India to Iran, if at all it existed there, since we have the testimony of Darius himself in his foundation charters that for building his palaces at Susa and Persepolis, he had imported skilled Indian workmen who presumably must have been well versed in the best art traditions of this country. The strength of the team invited from India for the building operations by the Achaemenian kings is not known but it seems to have been considerable looking to the favourable reputation which India enjoyed amongst the nations of antiquity. India was radiating her philosophy, religious ideas, art and culture amongst her neighbours on the periphery and beyond it. The evidence of the earliest Greek writers who visited India is unmistakable that the results obtained by the Indian workmen of which they were eye-witness, were far superior to those monuments which were raised in Iran. This is perfectly corroborated by comparing the Iranian columns with the Aśokan pillars of which the aesthetic performance is exceedingly high, let alone their being vehicles of profound ideas of which the Iranians had little conception. Their pillars are bald and stolid whereas the Mauryan columns are full of animation being inspired by purposeful ideas and standing as monuments of long established divine cults. The miracle wrought in these Mauryan pillars is not surprising if we look upon them as descended from the ancestry of the Vedic monumental columns (*varishṭha stūṇā-rāja*), or hundred Pillared Hall (*śatabhujī śālā*), or copper-sheated posts (*ayaḥ-stūṇāḥ*), or the magnificent *Skambhas* spoken of as the hundred-branched or the thousand-branched *Vanaspatis*. The handling of such colossal material, its fashioning into desired forms, its transport to distant centres and above all investing it with ideas that always go with greater art,—these were the problems which had been tackled successfully by generations of workmen and the accumulated skill of ages was at the disposal of Mauryan master-artists for whom there was hardly any new unsolved problem relating to their art. The honourable terms employed for these *Rāja Takshas* or *Rāja Śilpins* show the esteem in which they were held for the people bestowed on them such honorific titles as *Sthapati-samrāṭ*, and *Vāstu-vidyāchārya*, as given in the Jātakas. One point has to be specially noted,

namely, that the transition from timber to stone in the construction of buildings was not done overnight under the behest of royal authority or an architect howsoever great, of foreign import. The facts of art-history in India demonstrate that it was a long drawn process in which the full transition from wood to stone was achieved in a very cautious and experimental manner, e.g. in the Chandragupta Sabhā itself the floor and roofing and other decorative accessories were in timber, whereas the pillars were of stone. The same is indicated by the façade of Lomas Ṛishi cave where the material only is stone but the forms are of wooden precedents. In the western Indian caves we find still in existence timber and stone work being adopted together, e.g. the massive wooden ribs of the vaulted roof and the perforated screens of the *chaitya* windows. The gateways and railings of Bharhut and Sāñchī are essentially types of wooden architecture.

Indian Śilpa texts inform that there existed from earliest times a Śilpa tradition attributed to *Viśvakarmā*. It appears that the various elements of art and architecture of Mauryan times as pointed out above accord with the long evolved principles of the school of Viśvakarmā.

We have seen how the walls and roofing in the rooms of the Ummagga palace were finished with the highest polish and the same is stated in the Jaina Aupapātika Sūtra (S. 2-5) about the walls of the shrine of Pūrṇabhadra Chaitya being highly polished and also the Mother Goddess tablet of homage (*Pṛithivī śilā-paṭṭa*) being as lustrous as a mirror (*āyaṁsatalovamā = ādarśa talopama*). The colour of the polish is said to be black (*kṛishṇa*), bluish (*nīlotpala*), green (*marakata*), and enamel white (*kallitta*). It is of great value that all these four colours are verified in the N.B P. Ware. Thus the combined testimony of the Brāhmanical, Buddhist and Jaina literatures speak with one voice about the existence of this polish, of its various lustrous shades, of the recipes for producing it and of its use on a large scale on walls and roofings and on ceramics of household use. The proper word used by all these writers is *ślakshṇa, ślakshṇī-karaṇa*, signifying the polished surface or the technique of producing it. In later literature, e.g. Mahā-vaṁśa, we find mention of *Sanha-Mattikā* (*ślakshṇa mṛittikā*) specially prepared for imparting the necessary polish on the walls to be used for painting.

(b) FOLK ART

The tradition of folk art may be recognised in a group of free standing statues which have been found at many places in north India, in Bihar and in Orissa. They are mostly figures of Yakshas and Yakshīs and they carry with them a distinct plastic tradition which it is not possible to connect with the finished

products of the court art. The material as observed about the images has been found over a very extensive area, from Mathura to Orissa and from Patna upto western India, thousands of miles in length and breadth, which establishes in an undisputed manner the existence of a far flung style. These can be classed as representing the earliest Indian statuary consisting a group of free standing huge figures (more than life-size), installed under any protective shed or the open sky, carved out in the round, but still conceived frontally. They are symbol of power, impressive in their sheer volume, powerful built, colossal size, proclaim unmistakably their divine character. The following images are noteworthy :—

(1) Yaksha statue from Parkham village in Mathura district (inscribed). [Fig. 50].

(2) Yaksha from Barodā village in Mathura district. [Fig. 51].

(3) Yakshī from Jhīng Kī Nagarā in Mathura district.

(4) Yaksha statue found at Noh, village in Bharatpur district.

(5) Yakshī from Besnāgar near Bhopal. Now preserved in Indian museum.

(6) A Yaksha statue from Pawāyā, ancient Padmāvatī, now preserved in the Gwalior Museum (inscribed).

(7) Yakshī holding fly-whisk in the right hand (*Chāmaragrāhiṇī*) from Dīdārganj, Patna. Bearing bright Mauryan polish. [Fig. 52].

(8) A Yaksha statue from Patna, now preserved in the Indian Museum (inscribed).

(9) Yaksha statue from Patna (inscribed) now preserved in the Indian Museum.

(10) Yakshī statue at Besnagar locally known as *Telin*.

(11) Trimukha Yaksha statue—trifaced image found at the site of Rajghat (ancient Banaras), now preserved in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, B.H.U. [Fig. 53].

(12) A Yaksha image found somewhere in western India, once istalled in the Victoria Albert Museum, now in National Museum. Probably it comes from Sopārā.

(13) A Yaksha image found at Bhilsa in the bed of river Betwa (*Vetravatī*).

(14) Several big statues of Yakshas found recently in excavations at Śiśupālgarh in Orissa.

(15) Ahichchhatrā Yaksha from Phalgu-Vihāra (Kushāṇa period).

(16) Yaksha image from Amin in Kurukshetra.

IDENTIFICATION— The question of the identification of this remarkable group of statues is of paramount interest for understanding the history of early Indian art both in the Mauryan and Śuṅga periods. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, K. P. Jayaswal and Ram Prasad Chanda had worked on this problem and taken part in the controversy regarding the proper identification of these images.

Prof. Jayaswal was the first to suggest on the basis of his reading and interpretation of the inscription on the Parkham image, that it represented the statue of King Ajātśatru of the Śiśunāga dynasty. He read the name *Kuṇika* which according to the Jaina tradition was a second name of Ajātśatru. Subsequently when two more Yaksha statues were found at Pāṭaliputra Jayaswal again identified them as the portrait statues of two Nanda emperors, Nanda and his son Mahānandī. Ram Prasad Chanda, however, controverted this view with cogent arguments developed in his monograph entitled. *"Four Yaksha Statues"*. There he has conclusively shown that these statues cannot be taken as those of Magadha emperors but represent figures of Yakshas and Yakshīs who were worshipped as part of the folk cults prevalent in ancient India. Dr. Coomaraswamy was at first inclined to agree with Jayaswal but later on convinced that these statues represent Yakshas and Yakshīs. He wrote about the Parkham Yaksha, "In view of the recent criticism it is impossible to adhere to Jayaswal's view and it is necessary to revert to the opinion that the statue represents Yaksha and must date from the third century B.C."

The question should be decided on the basis of the firm facts. In the first instance the short inscription on the female statue, locally known as *Mansā Devī*, found at Jhīng Kā Nagarā, calls it a Yakhī (in Prakrit, Sanskrit, Yakshī). The statue from Pawāyā (Padmāvatī) also is mentioned in the epigraph as that of Māṇibhadra Yaksha, which was installed by the members of a *Goshṭhī* at Pawāyā. The image found at Noh, in Bharatpur district, was traditionally known as that of a Jakhaiyā, i.e. Yaksha.

As regards the Parkham image which Dr. Jayaswal identified with that of Kuṇika, the fact is that the inscription mentions the name of a teacher called Kuṇika, and his pupil *Kuṇikāntevāsī* had established that image. At the beginning can be read three letters *Nibhada* which obviously form part of the name *Manibhadra* (in Prakrit) or *Māṇibhadra*. So the Parkham image also represented the Yaksha Māṇibhadra.

As regards the two Patna statues inscription on one of them reads *Bhange Achachhā Nīvika* which may be rendered into Sanskrit as *Bhagavān Akshaya Nīvika*, i. e. of inexhaustible wealth; the inscription on the other as *Savata-Nandi* i.e. in Sanskrit *Sarvatra*

Nandī. Both of these are apparently good Yaksha names. Dr. Vogel has mentioned (in his *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum*) that the statue obtained in the Baroda village of Mathura district was also being worshipped under the name of *Jakhaiyā*.

We thus see on the basis of both the inscriptions on some of the statues and also local traditions obtained on the spot with respect to some of them, that these were the statues of Yakshas and Yakshīs whose worship at one time was extremely popular.

STYLE—Stylistically the above group of Yaksha images is distinguished by the following characteristic features :—

(1) They are of colossal size (*Mahākāya, Mahā-pramāṇa*) and massively built with pronounced emphasis on muscular strength.

(2) They are usually carved in the round (*chaturmukha-darśana*) and, therefore, free-standing ; the main effect is frontal, as if they were intended to be seen from the front side only.

(3) The drapery consists of a turban on the head and upper scarf thrown on the shoulders and arms, or tied round the chest and a *dhotī* hanging below up to the ankles and fastened with a girdle.

(4) The ornaments consists of heavy ear-rings, heavy torque (*Kaṇṭhā*) and a flat triangular necklace and also armlets with feathered projections.

(5) There is also a tendency to depict the figure as slightly protuberant or pot-bellied as in the case of the Parkham Yaksha and Māṇibhadra Yaksha from Pawāyā. These images are marked by the distinctive style which is the earliest in the history of Indian sculpture as known from historical sites. We have no earlier specimens to connect this style with preceding traditions or to throw light on the origin of this art. But its dominant character and almost country-wide extension, as for example from Mathura to Orissa and Pāṭaliputra to Bombay, furnish certain proofs that this art must have had a long history, most probably rendered in perishable material like clay or wood. As regards their position in the evolution of Indian art the most natural suggestion is that they were executed during the Mauryan period (third century B. C.). It was just the time when stone was being used for architecture and sculpture under the direction of the Mauryan emperors Chandragupta and Aśoka. The polished specimens of Mauryan art represent a court style whereas the Yaksha images are examples of folk art.

With the making of these images a style of art became established which the artists of the subsequent period were bound to regard as their model. This is what we actually find in the art of the Śuṅga period. The Yaksha images carved in the monuments of Bharhut and Sanchi are the proof of the continuity of the Yaksha

tradition both in iconography and in the style of art. The Sanchi and Bharhut Yaksha appear in the direct line of their ancestors, viz. the Yaksha images found at Parkham in the Mathura district and nearer home at Bhilsā and Pawāyā.

MEANING AND CULT OF YAKSHA—The Yaksha problem in Indian religion, literature and art is of dimensions worthy of special attention. Perhaps no other cult is as ancient, as widespread and as deeply ingrained in the lives of the people as the Yaksha cult. Even today each Indian village has a Yakṣa shrine under the name of *Bīr* (गाँव-गाँव को ठाकुर, गाँव-गाँव को बीर), and on enquiry it was found that Yaksha worship under different names is a living cult from Kashmir to the Tamil Land (*Vīran, Māran,* i. e. tutelary deity) and from Assam to Saurāshṭra. A Yaksha shrine is in the nature of a low platform on which a conical aniconic image is placed usualy with a niche for lamp. There are four points of distinction between a Śiva Liṅga and a Yaksha image. Firstly, that there should be a Yaksha shrine in each village; secondly, a Yaksha image is single on its platform called *chatvara* (Hindi, *Chaurā*) or *sthāna* (Hindi, *thān*) but a Śiva shrine may have other images also. Thirdly, there can be no niche or depression for putting a lamp in a Śiva Liṅga; and fourthly, the Yaksha image is peaked at the top, while the Śiva Liṅga is rounded. There is evidence in the Purāṇas to indicate that originally Yaksha cult widely prevailed, but it was supplanted by the Śiva cult. According to the Matsya Purāṇa the city was under the chieftainship of Harikeśava Yaksha (still worshipped as Harsū Brahma) who became a worshipper of Śiva and after his conversion, Śiva became the presiding deity of the city and Yakshas were relegated to a subordinate position. Even today there are four Yaksha platforms or shrines in Banaras Hindu University area and in Varāṇasī a number of them, including Lahurā Bīr (the junior Yaksha) and Bullā Bīr (the senior Yaksha; *Bullā* being a Prakrit form of Sanskrit *Vipula*) very similar to Chulakokā and Mahākokā Devatās of Bharhut. In medieval India we come across numerous references to a group of fifty-two Bīrs of which several lists are preserved (see my book : "*Ancient Indian Folk Cults*"). In Gupta art and literature Yaksha worship finds a prominent place being represented in Ajanta and mentioned in the *Chaturbhāṇī* as *Rathyā* Yaksha (Yaksha of the street). Kālidāsa has immortalised the Yakshas conceived in a rich semi-mythical background with Rāja-rāja Kubera as their king and Alakā as their city, pointed also to the amity between Śiva and Kubera, the former having an abode in the precincts of the capital. In Kushāṇa art we have hundreds of images at Mathura representing Yakshas and Kubera with his consort, Bhadrā or Hārītī, the auspicious goddess of children, whose worship spread from Gandhāra to Magadha, and who was converted by the Buddha from her nature as a cruel ogress to a benevolent mother. In the Śuṅga art the Yaksha deity reigns supreme since at that time

the forms of Brāhmanical gods and goddesses and also the Buddha or Tīrthaṅkara images have not been crystallised. It appears as if the monumental Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi are dedications of a community devoted to the Yaksha deities both in male and female forms carved on the gateways and the railings. We are fortunate to have labels on some of them, e.g. *Kupiro Yakho, Yakhī Sudasanā, Suchilomo Yakho, Supavaso Yakho,* and the two *devatās, Mahā Kokā* and *Chula Kokā* mentioned above. The higher religion of the Buddha and the popular cult of Yakshas were shaking hands in a strange fraternising spirit and the people offered their homage equally to both of them. This seems to be the meaning of Aśoka's statement that by his forging contact with the people in the countryside and questioning them on matters of religion (*jānapadasa janasa dasanam dhama-palipuchhā*), the unmingled (lower) gods became mingled with the upper ones (*amisā devā husu te dānī misā kaṭā*). It was likely at this time that a mass of Yaksha material infiltrated into the Epics. The Rāmāyaṇa mentions Yakshahood and immortal life (*Yakshatvam amaratvaṁ cha*) as synonyms (Kishkindhā, 11.94). In the Mahābhārata Brahmā conferred on Vaiśravaṇa three boons, viz. immortality, lordship of wealth and of sovereignty of the worlds (*amaratvaṁ dāne sattvaṁ lokapālatvameva cha,* Āraṇyaka Parva, 258. 15).

Rājā, literally, the resplendent one, was the title of Yaksha; their king Kubera being called Rāja-rāja or Mahārāja, viz. the big Yaksha. The Buddhist texts often refer to the four *Mahārājika* Gods (*chattāro mahārājāno*) of whom Vaiśravaṇa, king of the Yakshas, was chief of the North, Dhṛitarāshṭra, king of the Gandharvas, of the East, Virūḍhaka, king of the Kumbhāṇḍas (the ithyphallic dwarf), of the South, and Virūpāksha, king of the Nāgas, of the West; all the four in reality receiving homage as Mahā-Rāja Gods, who are labelled as Yaksha on the Bharhut railing.

The most important synonym of Yaksha was *Brahman,* the Mahābhārata referring to a Yaksha festival as *Brahma Maha* in which members of all the four *Varṇas* took part in a festive mood (*tataste brāhmaṇāḥ sarve kshatriyāścha suvismitāḥ, vaiśyāḥ śūdrāś cha muditāḥ chakrur brahma-mahaṁ tadā,* Ādi Parva, 152, 18). In the Matsya country round about Jaipur at its capital city Viraṭa, there used to be a big Yaksha festival or *Brahma Maha* which was supervised by the king himself and at which wrestling bouts formed the main feature. From the earliest times Yaksha came to be associated with long life and wealth and it was an important factor in their cult becoming so popular. In iconography we find Yakshas holding a nectar flask. The Yaksha city is called *Brahma-pura* in the Śānti Parva and referred to as inviolable (*avadhyaṁ-Brahma-puram,* Śānti Parva 171.15). Indeed the belief in the death-conquering ability of the Yakshas was so deep-rooted that even the gods Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva have been given the epithet *anihata,* a synonym of *avadhya,* in the Ghosundi inscription.

The Atharvaveda describes a Yaksha abode as *aparājita Brahma-purī* (AV. 10.2.29-33). The Yaksha cult finds an important place in the religious stream of the Atharvaveda and we also meet with attempts at sublimating the imagery of Yaksha since the Creator himself is referred to as the Great Yaksha standing in centre of these worlds, walking on water or the primeval flood and deriving his movements from the power of Heat (*mahad yakshaṁ bhuvanasya mıdhye tapasi krāntaṁ salilasya pṛishṭhe*). The latter feature is well known since the Yaksha conversing with Yudhishṭhira was the deity of a lake and several big images of Yakshas have been found on the banks of ponds or rivers, as in the case of the towering Yaksha from Besnagar which is 12 ft. high. A Yaksha was also called *Mahat* or *Adbhuta*, the former term is often used, and Buddha speaks of *Mahat*-worship (*mahadupaṭṭhāna*) as of lowly character (*tirachchhāna vijjā, michchhā jīvā*, Brahmajāla Sutta).

In the Ṛigveda Yaksha worship is mentioned several times but not as an approved way. The followers of Mitra and Varuṇa are desired to remain free from Yaksha influence (RV. VII.61.5). It is prayed that in the face of Mitra and Varuṇa of wondrous powers (*adbhuta-kratu*) being present, there was no need of a deity like Yaksha (RV. V.70.4). In one place Agni is said to be big enough to be even the lord of Yaksha (*Yakshasyādhyakshaṁ tavisham bṛihantam*, RV, X.88.13). There is a more specific reference in which the abode of Yaksha or a Yaksha shrine is explicitly mentioned (*yakshaṁ sadam*, RV. IV.3.13), 'praying to Agni that he should not visit the place of a Yaksha to which deluded persons were going', probably a reference to the lower class of people, not following the Aryan deities and who believed in the Yaksha cult. But there is one reference to show that the Yakshas began to be associated with beautiful form even in the Ṛigveda, the Maruts being compared to beautiful goodlooking and benevolent Yakshas (*yakshadṛiśo na śobhayantamaryāḥ*, RV. VII.56.16). This aspect of the Yakshas being good spirits gradually found deeper root as in the Gṛihya Sūtras where the new student admitted to the Vedic school wishes himself to be as loving to the eye as a Yaksha (*yakshamiva chakshushaḥ priyo vā bhūyāsam*, Gobhila G.S. 3. 4. 28, Drāhyāyaṇa G. S. 3. 1. 25). This phase of Yaksha cult gained strength and during the Janapada period (c. 1200-500 B.C.) the Yaksha cult established its authority over the whole people, as we find in the Pāli and Ardha-Māgadhī literature. (*Nāyā-dhamma-kahā*, 1. 25; *Rāyapaseniya*, Kaṇḍikā 1. 48). Amongst the several lists of the cult-festivals including as many as 20 or more names we find *Yakkha Maha* or *Vessamaṇa-maha* as one of them. The Atharva reflecting the popular beliefs more faithfully is full of the glorification of the Yaksha god saying that all the chiefs in the kingdom pay homage to the great Yaksha (*mahad Yakshaṁ bhuvanasya madhye tasmai baliṁ rāshṭra-bhṛito bharanti*, AV. 10. 8. 15). As a matter

of fact the belief in the Nāgas and the Yakshas was rooted in the soil. These deities were taken wholesale in the Hindu religion and in this process a great deal of mutual borrowing took place. Indra, Varuṇa, Aryamā, all leading Vedic gods, whose essential features were fixed in the Ṛigveda quit their high pedestal and mingle with the lowly Yakshas. In Greece, too, the gods of the Olympian heights came to mingle with Hermes or rough stone monuments representing local godlings before actual images were planned for them. In the list of Yakshas given in the Mahābhārata, the Buddhist literature and the Purāṇas, we find that most of these Vedic gods are identified as Yakshas. In a Sūtra of Pāṇini (V. 3. 84) giving a list of godlings after whom personal names were adopted for children by their parents, we find mention of Śevala, Supari, and Viśāla (names of Yakshas) read with Varuṇa and Aryamā, who originally were Vedic deities, but in this context are names af Yakshas. Viśāla is one of the assembly of Yakshas attending the Vaiśravaṇa Sabhā in the Sabhā Parva (10. 16). Varuṇa is a Yaksha chief in the list of the Āṭānāṭiya Suttanta (*Dīgha Nikāya*, III, 195; *Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. III) which text mentions Indra, Soma, Varuṇa, Prajāpati along with Māṇibhadra and Ālavaka as Yaksha chiefs. In the Yaksha list of the Mahā-Māyūrī, an important and religious text, Vishṇu is the name of the Yaksha of Dvārakā.

Several important Yaksha shrines are mentioned, e.g. Yaksha Śākya Vardhana at Kapilavastu, Yaksha Pūrṇabhadra at Champā, Yaksha Moggara-pāṇi at Rājagṛiha, Indra-śaila *Yaksha* near Rājagṛiha, Yakshiṇī shrine probably of *Jarā* or *Hārītī* at Rājagṛiha (Āraṇyaka, 83. 23), a Yaksha in the gateway at Vaiśālī, Yaksha Suchiloma near Rājagṛiha, *Chaitya* of Yaksha Śaradamya at Vaiśālī and of Māṇibhadra in Mithilā. The details of worship included music, dance, offering of lights, flowers, eatables, etc., a code different from the Vedic Yajñas and similar to the *patraṁ, pushpaṁ, phalaṁ, toyam* manner of the Gītā.

As regards the Yaksha images we find two equally strong traditions, viz. aniconic forms continuing up to now and the dominant sized images described above as a group of the wide geographical distribution from Kurukshetra to Orissa and Nalia Sopārā on the western coast near Bombay. The Atharvaveda had set a norm for these big images calling them *Yakshaṁ ātmanvat*, the big-bodied one (AV. 10.2.32). The epic described the Yaksha as colossal in size (*mahā-kāya*), lofty like the palm (*tāla samuchchhrita*), towering high like a mountain (*parvatopama*), radiant like the sun and fire, death-conquering (*adhṛishya*, Āraṇyaka Parva, 297. 20 21), and of great physical strength (*mahā-bala*). The available Yaksha statues literally confirm this definition, and as every art critic has observed, they are most impressive by their size and ponderous volume magnificently conceived as free-standing deities, command-

ing the whole countryside and worshipped as Yakshas (Hindi, जाख, जखैया) for about 2500 years. From the point of view of art, these statues appear as grand ancestors of the subsequent Bodhisattva, Buddha, Tīrthaṅkara and Vishṇu images; not only the size and plastic effect but the various elements of drapery and ornamentation were adopted by later artists called upon to evolve an iconographic formula for new divine figures. This is a point which cannot be over emphasised in a history of Indian art, an appraisal of which helps us to understand clearly the origins of the Kushāṇa and Gupta statuary. It is certain that the tradition of folk art had an independent style of greater vitality than even the court art of the Mauryan times. Also, the stone images of Yakshas may belong to the fourth-third centuaries but the iconographic idiom was of much greater antiquity, and rendered through the mediumî of clay, a feature suriving to our own times.

We still find some very big images made temporarily of earth and worshipped for a time only, both in North India and the South (Tamil, Ayyanār images). Thus the iconographic tradition of the Yaksha figures have been preserved. The right hand was shown in *abhaya-mudrā*, a divine feature later on accepted for Buddha, Bodhisattva and other images. Sometimes the flywisk was a distinguishing emblem of Yaksha or Yakshī image (cf. the Dīdārganj Yakshī), the idea being that these deities were attendant on their king, Mahā-rāja Vaiśravaṇa or Kubera and this was a mark of honour proclaiming their relationship with the god of wealth and immortality. There are long lists of Yaksha names but of them five were chosen as a group named *Pañcha Vīra*, viz. Māṇibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra, Dīrghabhadra, Yakshabhadra and Svabhadra, who in the gradual replacing of the Yaksha hegemony by Bhāgavata deities became a group of the five Vṛishṇi heroes (*Pañcha-Vṛishṇi Vīras*) (as Saṅkarshaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba) mentioned in the Morā Well-Inscription from Mathura. It was believed that an auspicious Jewel (*Bhadra Maṇi*) was in the custody of Yaksha Māṇibhadra, a close associate of Kubera and the Master of his treasures. Wealth and immortality or long life were the two human factors which made Yaksha worship of irresistible appeal to the folk mind. Religion, literature and art all testify to the importance of this ancient cult.

CHAPTER VIII

8. Śuṅga-Kāṇva Art (C. 184 B. C-27 B. C.)

The Śuṅga period of Indian history begins with the coronation of Pushyamitra Śuṅga (c. 184 B. C.). He was a mighty emperor who assumed the title of *Senāpati* and cleared Madhyadeśa from the dangers of Greek invasions. Patañjali, the great grammarian, author of the Mahābhāshya commentary, lived in his time and was most probably the chief priest in his *Yajña*. It seems to have been a period of Sanskrit revival and of great religious movement and literary creation. In the domain of art we find the use of stone adopted on a country-wide scale. The tradition of building monumental Stūpas realised in great splendour seen as at Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati, and the art of carving transferred from wooden to lithic medium in established convention which set the norm for the evolution of the classical art of India. The religious beliefs about the worship of *Yakshas* and *Nāgas* and other folk deities on the one hand and the popular faith in Buddhism on the other were transferred to the medium of art with lasting perfection and beauty. The art of the Śuṅga age is distinguished not only by monumental quality and grandeur of conception but by a rare harmony and feeling of great joy in which many popular motifs were admitted with utmost natural simplicity. A detailed analysis of Śuṅga art motifs puts in our possession the main springs of Indian decorative art rooted in the utmost antiquity. It appears that the leaves of an ancient and traditional textbook are being opened illustrated with traditional motifs like *Śrī-Lakshmī, Pūrṇaghaṭa*, scenes of *Uttarakuru, Dharmachakra, Triratna, Kalpavṛiksha, Kalpalatā* and a hundred other motifs of great variety and richness. The assemblage of motifs in Śuṅga art is like a vast epic in which the entire religious life of the people may be seen as if reflected in a mirror for all time to come. Aśoka had started the building of the Stūpas as a movement on a big scale and the same fructifies in full glory in Śuṅga art.

The Stūpa

The Stūpa, literally a mound (Hindi *thūhā*, Pali *thūbha*), was a sepulchral monument generally made of earth on the site of the funeral pyre (*chitā*) owing to which it was also known as *chaitya*. The practice was to mark the spot of cremation raising a mound of earth or planting a *Pīpala* tree both of which came to be termed *chaitya*. The mound of earth was associated with a wooden post which was therefore termed as *chaitya-yūpa*, the like of which are known in the burial mounds of Lauriā Ṇandangarh. The original mound of earth served as a core to be encased later by

bricks and in the next stage by stone known as *śilā-kañchuka* or *śilā-ācchchhādana*. The Stūpa of Bharhut was covered with bricks and plastered on the outside and that of Sanchi also encased with stone. Such enlargements of the original mounds of earth which were held to be specially sacred were a common feature of the bigger Stūpas of later times known as *Maheśākhya* brought about by the conversion of the smaller ones (*Alpe-śākhya*). The construction of the brick and stone Stūpas gave rise to complicated technical problems of architecture which were further elaborated by the building of railings and gateways. In no other Indian monument, excepting the temples, the architectural evolution is so regularly traceable from the simplest to the most complex form in each essential element as well as decorative features with successive belts of which the classical and medieval Stūpas were loaded. The antiquity of the Stūpa monument both on the religious and architectural side is a matter of great significance for the history of Indian art.

EARLIER TRADITION AND SYMBOLISM : The Stūpa now associated primarily with Buddhism had a much earlier origin. It goes back to the Ṛigveda where the flaming pile of Agni's light is spoken of as a Stūpa (RV. 7. 2. 1)[1] ; the Stūpa is compared to the outspreading form of a tree standing erect (RV. 1. 24. 7)[2]. We also find there the idea of a descendant of Aṅgiras (a name of Agni) called Hiraṇya-stūpa, the Golden Stūpa, who had invoked god Savitā as the supreme pile of splendour implying that both Agni on earth and Savitā in heaven are like the two golden Stūpa from which cosmic life emanates. In Vedic symbology Gold examplifies the Seed of Life (*Prāṇa*), and thus the Mound of Gold (*Hiraṇya-stūpa*) or the Pillar of Fire was regarded as the appropriate symbol of the life principle as it exists in the individual and the universal. In pre-Buddhist tradition the Stūpa had come to be accepted as the monument associated with the life of a *Mahāpurusha*, who was regarded as a "Mound of Gold" or "Pile of Light" (*Agni Skandha*). Verily, in nature Sūrya or Savitā is such a Pillar of Light or Mound of Gold, a vast conflagaration of Divine Resplendence. The Buddha who had obtained such perfection of knowledge and become the Enlightened One (*Bhagavān, Samyak-Sambuddha*), was truly the object of worship through the symbol of the Stūpa. As tradition says, his ashes were parcelled out into eight portions and each of them (*Śarīra-dhātu*) was deposited in a commemorative Stūpa. Of these eight, seven were

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१. जुषस्व नः समिधमग्ने अद्य शोचा बृहद्यजतं धूममृण्वन् ।
उप स्पृश दिव्यं सानु स्तूपैः सं रश्मिभिस्ततनः सूर्यस्य ॥

२. अबुध्ने राजा वरुणो वनस्योर्ध्वं स्तूपं ददते पूतदक्ष ।
नीचीनाः स्थुरुपरि बुध्न एषामस्मे अन्तर्निहिताः केतवः स्युः ॥

३. हिरण्यस्तूपः सवितर्यथा त्वाङ्गिरसो जुह्वे वाजे अस्मिन् ।
एवा त्वार्चन्नवेस वन्दमानः सोमस्ये वांशुं प्रति जागराहम् ॥

raised by Kshatriyas, viz. temporal powers, and the eighth by a Brāhmaṇa representing the spiritual authority of the Buddha. It means that the original Stūpa symbolism associated with the Buddha represented completely the two essential elements of his nature, viz. the Buddha as Chakravartī and the Buddha as Yogī which later on played an important part in the formulating of the Buddha's image, i. e. sovereign ruler with *Chhatra* and *Chāmara* and a Yogic teacher of universal Dharma seated on diamond seat of *Padmāsana*.

The Stūpa exercised its fascination on the minds of the people. The learned regarded it as a metaphysical symbol and the common man worshipped it as the visible symbol of the Great Light that once was and whose relics were still enshrined within the heart of the Stūpa. The spherical or cylindrical drum, sited on the ground and crowned by a *harmikā*, or Divine Mansion (*Deva-sadana*) was in itself a complete symbol of the *Mahāpurusha*, the Great Being.

The Buddha was but a manifestation of the powers that inhere in that universal Purusha whose symbol is Sūrya. As a scion of the solar dynasty, viz. the race of the Ikshvāku kings whose descent from Sūrya was well known, he represented an individual ray of that light which is the Divine Supernal Sun. It was, therefore, a problem for the early metaphysicians in Buddhism to fix upon an appropriate symbol to commemorate the Enlightened One. The *Chakra* and the Stūpa were selected as two arch symbols by the early Buddhist teachers. The Wheel or *Chakra* became the symbol of Dharma, i. e. the World Order of which the Buddha was an exalted exponent. The *Dhamma* is the foundation and support of the cosmos, and is the perfect symbol of Time which is threefold as the *Chakra* is called *Tryadhvā*, i. e. the revolving wheel of the three times (Skt. *Adhvan*) i. e. "present, past and future". (Edgerton, *BHSD.* p. 260). The Stūpa as the second symbol represents the solar light or the Sun which is the source of the power that manifests in the *Dharma Chakra*.

In Vedic symbology the Stūpa of Agni as the type of the cosmic Fire or the universal principle of creativity, becomes individuated at one centre in the *Yajña* as Yūpa, the Tiller. This association is evident in the funeral mounds of Lauriā Nandangarh where the Stūpa and the *Yūpa* were found together, and also best illustrated in the great Stūpa of Sanchi where Aśoka erected his pillar in front of the original Stūpa.

The symbolism or the representational basis of the Yūpa was completely transferred to the Stūpa as we find it in Buddhism. The Yūpa was comprised of the following four parts :—

1 The portion that is dug in the ground (*nikhāta*). This is sacred to the world of the fathers (*pitṛi*), the departed ancestors in whose memory the Stūpa is also raised.

2 The portion above the dug-in-part, up to the girdled rope (*ūrdhvaṁ nikhātā-dāraśanāyai*). This is the portion sacred to the world of men (*manushyaḷoka*).

3 The portion above the girdle up to the top-ring (*yadūrdhvaṁ raśanāyā āchashālam*). This is sacred to the world of gods (*devaloka*).

4 The space of two or three fingers' breadth above the top-ring (*ūrdhvaṁ chashālāt dvayaṅgulaṁ vā trayaṅgulaṁ vā*). This uppermost portion is sacred to the world of the archetypal gods (*Sādhyadeva*).[1]

In the Hindu temple also, of which the architecture followed similar metaphysical principle, we find this fourfold division in the form of the basement (*jagatī*), the cubical portion (*garbhagṛiha* or *maṇḍovara*), the tower (*śikhara*), and the *kalaśa* placed on the *āmalaka-śilā* as its base and surmounted on the top by the *dhvaja* or the emblem of the deity corresponding to the *yashṭi* and *chhatra* in the centre of the *harmikā*. It is evident that the ancient Stūpa and the Prāsāda were developed from an identical religious consciousness and both were symbolical representations of the manifest cosmos and unmanifest divine. In one case the deity is the Buddha, in the other the Deva, both enshrining the great light. The Stūpa from this point of view, although raised on the relics of a Mahāpurusha when he had passed away, actually was not a mournful sign but an emblem of greatest festivity. That the Great Man had entered *parinirvāṇa* was no cause for sorrow. The idea behind it was one of universal joy and felicitation—a thanksgiving that the Mahāpurusha had appeared on earth and lighted a flame which was going to be perpetual, a light which would never be put out, a ray emanating from his forehead that would encompass all regions of space. Thus the Stūpa was verily the mound of gold (*Hiraṇya-stūpa*), standing as the dominant symbol of Wisdom, Dharma and Sovereign Spiritual Authority. This is shown in the numerous scenes of dance and music as well as the varied life of gods and men amongst the carved scenes on the railings and gatways of the Stūpa, and later on as at Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda even on the casing slabs.

Thus it is clear that the Stūpa raised its monumental head as a complete example of the indigenous religious spirit rooted deep in the soil and in the hearts of the people. It was not an exotic innovation and did not depart from the belief universally held. It is, therefore, that we find the entire community of the people

1. *Tasya yannikhātam. Tena pitṛilokaṁ jayatyatha yadūrdhvaṁ nikhātādārśanāyai tena manushya-lokaṁ jayatyatha yadūrdhvaṁ raśanāyā ā chashālāt tena devatokaṁ jayatyatha yadūrdhvaṁ chashālāt dvyaṅgulaṁ vā trayaṅgulaṁ vā sādhyā iti devāstena teshāṁ lokaṁ jayati sa loko vai sādhyair devairbhavati. Ya evametaddveda ||*
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,
3,7.1.25 ; see Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 173-4.

dedicating themselves, as shown by the donative epigraphs, to the building and the worship of the Stūpa. This is also the reason why the Stūpa did not from the outset remain exclusive but incorporated within its fold the popular cults of the Nāgas, Yakshas, Suparṇas, Kumbhāṇ 'as, and the numerous rich worlds of gods and men. Just as the various streams mingle their waters in the ocean similarly the various cults whole-heartedly contributed to the planning, decoration, imagery and the overall embellishment of the Stūpa. The building of a Mahāstūpa like that of Bharhut and Sanchi could not have been an ordinary event. It was as if the multifold life of the whole people found ample and lofty expression in these Mahā-Chaityas. That it was no haphazard event either is also demonstrated by the all-out sanction which the Great Buddha himself had given in its favour as his last will to Ānanda.

"How should we honour the body (relic-bones) of the Tathāgata ?" asked Ānanda.

"O Ānanda, you need not engage yourself in worshipping the body of the Tathāgata. But you dedicate yourself to the right meaning (*sadattha*) expounded by the Tathāgata as so many Kshatriyas, Brāhmaṇas, and householders are doing."

But Ānanda out of his overpowering devotion was impervious to this suggestion of the Teacher, and he repeated the question—"How should we honour the body of the Tathāgata ?" The Buddha knowing the devout heart of Ānanda, melted and replied: "As they do for the remains of a Chakravartin King, so Ānanda they should do for the remains of the Tathāgata. At the four cross-roads, similar to the Stūpa they raise for the Chakravartin, should they raise a Stūpa for the Tathāgata.[1]

According to this injunction a Stūpa commemorates a Chakravartin King and a Buddha. Amongst those deserving by their greatness or piety the honour of a Stūpa the Buddha also included the Pratyeka Buddhas, which denoted the honoured saints of other faiths also. This tradition of giving burial to the holy saints has been handed

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1. Ānanda—"*Kathaṁ mayaṁ Bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjāmā'ti ?*"

Buddha—"*Avyāvaṭā tumhe Ānanda hotha Tathāgatassa sarīrapūjāya. Iṅgha tumhe Ānanda sadattha ghaṭatha....*"

Ānanda—"*Kathaṁ pana Bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabbaṁ'ti.*"

Buddha—"*Yatha kho Ānanda raññ› chakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti, evaṁ Tathāgatassa sarīra paṭipajjitabbaṁ'ti.*"

Ānanda—"*Kathaṁ panaṁ Bhante raññ› chakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjantī' ti ?*"

Buddha—"*...chātummahāpathe raññ› chakkavattissa thūpaṁ karonti. Evaṁ.....chātummahāpathe Tathāgatassa thūpo kātabbo....*'

down to this day. It may be imagined that the Buddha was here giving his sanction to an ancient practice well known to the people and of wide acceptance by them.

It may also be noted that in referring to the ancient tradition of the funeral mounds the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has noted two architectural, viz. square (*chatuḥsrakti*) and round (*parimaṇḍala*) forms for a burial mound, and it is especially recorded that the monuments of the easterners (*prāchyāḥ*) were circular.[1]

Building of a Stūpa

The building of a Stūpa was a stirring event involving dimensional planning and effort. This is evident in the description given by the *Mahāvaṁsa* (chapters 28-31). The great Stūpa was known as *Mahā Thūpa* (20. 4) or *Mahā Chetiya* (20. 4). Its construction was known *Thūpa Kamma* or *Mahāthūpārambha*, and the superintendent of work as *Kammādhiṭṭhāyaka* (30. 98). A stone Stūpa was called *Śilāthūpa*. The *Mahāvaṁsa* specifically tells us that at the site of the Stūpa (*thūpaṭṭhāna*) a pillar was erected and in accordance with the ancient terminology, pointed out above, this pillar continued to be called a *Yūpa* (*hāretvā hi tahi yūpaṁ thūpaṭṭhānaṁ akhānayi*). On the appointed day the priest and the people assembled at the chosen spot. A Full Vase (*pūrṇaghaṭa*) was installed in the centre. The king walked up to it and holding out to his minister a rod (*paribhamaṇa daṇḍaka*) which was secured with a string to a fixed golden post, asked him to measure the site for the Stūpa. When this was about to be done a wise and experienced Mahāthera, seeing the danger in planning a Mahāstūpa of that dimension, advised the king that he should desist from a plan of such colossal size which was difficult to achieve and restrict himself to building only a *Majjima Chetiya* instead of a *Mahā Chetiya*. The central Stūpa was called *Chetiya* and round it the paraphernalia of railing and gateways was called *Chetiyāvaṭṭa* (Skt. *Chaityāvarta*), i. e. the peripheral portion of the Stūpa.

The laying of the foundation was the first act in the building. Soldiers were employed for transporting pieces of broken stone (*guḍapasāṇaka*, 9. 30) which were reduced to grit form (*chuṇṇita*) with sledge-hammer (*kūṭa*). It was further pulverised by moving elephants having their feet covered with leather hoses (*chammāvanadhdha pādehi mahāhatthīhi maddayi*, 29. 4). The building expert thus accomplished consolidation of the ground (*bhūmiyā thirabhāvattha*, 29. 4). Then the foundation of this stony material (*pāsāṇakoṭṭima*) was laid over with a kind of specially prepared plaster called *Navanīta Mattikā*, which was given this name from its thin consistency like that

1. *Chatuḥ srakti. Devāśchāsurāśchobhaye prājāpatyā dikshvaspardhanta te devā asurāntsapatnān bhātṛivyāndigbhyonudanta te dikkāḥ parābhavaṁtasmīdyā daivyaḥ prajāśchatuḥsraktīni tāḥ śmaśānāni kurvate thayā āsuryaḥ prāchyāstvadye tvatparimaṇḍalāni.*

of butter (*sushamā navanīta mattikā*). This ancient name was replaced later on in the Gupta period by the word *Mashaka* as found in the Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa (40. 3 ; 41. 14) in connection with the plaster used in preparing the surface for painting. This is called *Maskā* in the present day terminology which is literally the same as *Navanīta* (Skt. *Mrakshaṇa*; Pahlvi : *Masakā* ; Skt. back-formation : *Mashakam*—Hindi, Guj. *Maskā*). This plaster clay was prepared by mixing lime-plaster (*kharasudhā*), *murum*-sand (*marumba*), brick-powder (*iṭṭhakā chuṇṇa*), clay (*mattikā*), realgar (red arsenic, *manaḥśilā*) mixed with *til* oil (*tila taila*), molasses (*rasodaka*), pulp of the *Kapittha* fruit, *Kruvinda* powder and some insense (*sugandhaka*). This formula for preparing the *vajralepa* plaster also occurs in the Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa, which prescribes the *Bilva* (Aegle Marmelos) fruit for *Kapittha* and names the insence as *Guggula* (Vishṇudharmottara, 40. 1-3). Such foundation floor of stone grit and plaster was actually found at Bharhut by Cunningham.

Ten crores of bricks were ordered to be stacked at different points of the compass marked by a platform for offering flowers (*pushpādhāna*, 30.56 i.e. *pushpagrahaṇī vedikā*, BHSD. p. 218 ; cf. Smith *Mathura Jain Stūpa*, pl. XX). The *Chaitya* or *Dhātugarbha* was to be built by those bricks (*iṭṭhakā dasakoṭiyo*, 30.56). The actual form of the dome is compared to a water bubble (*mahābubbula*, 30.13). On the day when the construction was to begin the king ordered stores of clothes, garlands and food, barbers and toilet-men serving the whole people (*porājānapadā cheva*) who had come to participate in the great festival with music and dance. With large retinue, including forty thousand well-dressed persons, the king proceeded to the spot. Theras from many lands had gathered, what to say of the priests of the island itself (*nānādesā'pi āgañchchhu bahavo bhikkhavo idha*, 29.29). Monks from Rājagṛiha, Śrāvastī, Vaiśālī, Kauśāmbī, Ujjayinī, Pāṭaliputra, Kashmir, Vindhyāṭavī, Bodhagayā and the Greek city Alasanda, were invited and assembled in large numbers to witness the foundation ceremony. After completion the brick Stūpa was covered with slabs of marrow-colour stone (*medaveṇṇaka pāsāṇa*, 20.51). The decorative motif on the various parts of the Stūpa comprised the following *Ashṭa-māṅgalika* symbols, *pupphalatā* (flower garland), *chatuppada pantī* (row of animals), *haṁsa pantī* (row of geese), *muktā kiṅkiṇikajālaka* (festoons of pearls and small tinglers), *suvarṇa ghaṇṭā pantī* (row of golden bells), *dāmāni* (garlands), *muktādāmakalāpaka* (clustered pearl pendents), *ravichanda-tāra-rūpa-padumaka* (full lotus medallions, crescent shaped rosettes, stellar rosettes), *puṇṇaghaṭa pantī* (row of Full Vases), *añjali paggahā devā* (gods holding their hands in adoration), *nachchakā devatā* (*sadāmattaka* of Divyāvadāna, groups of dancing gods), *turiyavādaka devatā* (gods playing on musical instruments), *ādāsa gāhakā devā* (gods holding mirrors), *puppha sakhādhārā devā* (divine figures with flowering sticks), *padumādika gāhakā devā* (figures holding lotuses),

ratanagghiya pantī (row of jewels), *Dhammachakka pantī* (row of *Dharmachakras*), *khaggadharā* (row of figures holding daggers), *pātidharā devapantī* (row of figures holding bowls, *karoṭapāṇi devāḥ* of Divyāvadāna), and many other kinds of divine figures (*aññe devā cha'nekadhā* 30.65-68, 90-93). Jātaka scenes were carved in the meanders of golden creepers and numerous scenes from the life of the Buddha (a list of about thirtyfive scenes is being recounted) were carved on the body of the Stūpa. Figures of Mahābrahmā, Śakra, Pañchaśikha holding a *Vīṇā*, Māra with a thousand arms along with his female retinue, the four Mahārājika gods, the thirty-three gods (*tettiṁsa devaputtā*), thirty-two divine princesses (*dvāttiṁsā cha kumāriyo*), twenty-eight Yaksha kings (*yakkhasenāpati aṭṭhavīṁsati*), were represented. All the life-scenes of the Buddha beginning from his decision in the Tushita heaven and up to his sitting on the *Bodhimaṇḍa* were depicted. The Vessantara Jātaka specially was rendered in great detail (*Vessantara jātakaṁ tu vitthārena akārayi*, 30.88). Other Jātaka scenes were also carved on the railings and slabs of the Stūpa (*ye bhuyyena akāresi Jātakāni*, 30. 87).

The above description of a Mahāstūpa shows the extraordinary importance of these monuments in the Buddhist world. It holds good in a large measure in the case of such Mahāstūpas as those of Bharhut and Sanchi both from the point of view of architecture and decoration although it is of particular application to the Stūpas of the Andra country, viz. those of Amaravati and Nagarajunikonda. Those latter had decorative casing slabs which in the case of Bharhut and Sanchi were plain (*rūpakāne'tya sablāni dhātugabbhe manorame*, 30.97). The second architectural feature in the case of the Stūpas in the Andra region consisted in the box-like projections on the four sides joined to the main *Garbha* and each supporting five *Āyaka Kambhas* (*chatupassamhi chaturo mañjūsaṁ viya yojiya*, 30.60). Lastly the white colour of the stone (*medavaṇṇa pāsāṇa*) mentioned several times (30.57, 59, 96) gives a true pointer in the direction of the Andhra Stūpas and not those of Central India which are built of red stone.

The Stūpa Architecture

The Stūpa was built on the foundation of stone blocks called *pāshāṇa-kuṭṭima*. On this foundation a hemispherical dome called *aṇḍa* was raised. In the earlier period the ratio between the diameter and the height of the Stūpa was less than in the case of the Stūpas of the later period. The drum of the earlier Stūpas resembled a bell (*ghaṇṭākāra*). In the later Stūpas the drum became more elevated and elongated becoming cylindrical in form described as *Mahā-bubbula* shape, i. e. a giant water bubble. The top of the hemisphere was truncated and on its flat surface a modest

plat-form enclosed by a railing was added known as *harmikā*, literally, mansion of the gods which exactly corresponded to Vedic *deva-sadana*, of which the position was on the third ridge above the earth. In the centre of the *harmikā* was fixed a post, *Yashṭi*, surmounted by a series of three parasols (*trichhatra* or *Chhatrāvalī*) of which the number was later on raised to seven. [Fig. 54].

In course of time a natural development in the architecture of Stūpa was the desire to enclose it on all sides and this enclosure was called *vedikā* a term taken from the architecture of the Vedic Yajña. It was derived from the sacrificial altars called *Vedi* and seems to have originally signified the structure erected round the fire altar. The same form was later extended to an enclosure round any sacred object of worship ; e. g. the word is used in the Rāmāyaṇa for a railing round a *chaitya-vṛiksha*. In the Rummindei Inscription of Aśoka a stone enclosure was erected round the stone-pillar by Aśoka under the name of *silā-vigaḍa-bhicha*. In the Ghosuṇḍī Inscription of Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka the enclosure is called *prākāra*, i. e. a wall-like railing round the tablet of worship (*pūjā-śilā*). The same architectural feature was adopted for the Stūpas. In the case of the Bharhut and other Stūpas the *Vedikā* consisted of a series of upright pillars (*stambha, thambha*) ; each pillar was fixed to the ground by inserting its lower part in the socket of a stone basement (*ālambanapiṇḍikā*), buried under the earth to serve as the foundation. Between each pair of upright posts were fixed three transverse bars (*sūchī*) of which the ends were inserted in the sockets cut into the narrower sides of the pillars. The sokets were lenticular in shape and the cross-bars were of the form of flat pillows on account of which they were later on known as *takiā*. The top of the pillars was bonded together by a series of coping stones (*ushṇīśa*) which had on the bottom sidesocket holes (*chullī*) to receive the tenons (*chūḍā*) of the upright poles. The copings were round on the top and provided enough space on the two vertical sides for carving of decorative motifs and narrative scenes which became a very pleasing feature of Stūpa sculpture. Thus the four constituent parts, viz. the basement, upright pillar, cross-bar and the coping were bonded together into stable structure. [Fig. 55]. The great railing, *mahāvedikā* at Bharhut was profusely carved but the one at Sanchi was plain without any decoration. The railing was provided on four sides with four gateways called *toraṇa* facing the four cardinal points. [Fig. 56]. This was an important architectural feature of which the roots lay in the traditional philosophical conception of the fourfold pattern of creation symbolised in the four regions of space round a central fixed point or mount of gold called *Meru*. This became a religious cult of wide-spread popular belief known as *Diśāmaha*. The Stūpa with its gateways and railings was a complete symbol of the tetradic pattern of the cosmos as evolved in Buddhist religious tradition.

The path of circumambulation (*pradakshiṇā-patha*) ran round the Stūpa on its ground level inside the railing. Besides the ground railing another *pradakshiṇā-patha* was provided about the middle of the dome by erecting a raised platform round the Stūpa which was known as *medhi*, a terrace. This high terrace for the second *pradakshiṇā-patha* was also provided with a railing of smaller pillars. The third railing of which the pillars were even smaller was built at the top round the *harmikā*.

Stūpa of Bharhut

The village of Bharhut is situated six miles to the north-east of Uchahara, and nine miles nearly due south of the Satna station on the Jabulpore railway. It is exactly 120 miles to the south west of Allahabad and rather more than half way towards Jabulpore. The village belonged to the erstwhile Nagod State. It was on the ancient route which connected the north Kosala country with Chedi and Dakshiṇa-Kosala and was one of the most frequented highways which picked up the Magadha sector through the Son Valley. As indicated by the inscriptions the rich merchants and householders dedicated their wealth in raising one of the most impressive monuments of Indian art in the centre of this highway of trade. The other parallel route lay towards the west connecting Mathura with Vidiśā on the Vetravatī in Central India and with Pratishṭhāna on the Godāvarī in the south. Here the Stūpa of Sanchi occupied a position similar to that of Bharhut and the two together furnish proof of some intercontinental planning ordained by the exigencies of commercial and religious life. The two Stūpas are closely interrelated not only by their massive architecture but by the exhaustive documentation of religious ideas and art forms and especially the traditional folk cults and motifs depicted on an epic scale. Both of them adequately illustrate the art movement which submerged the country during the Śuṅga period as the natural outcome of the art consciousness generated during the Mauryan age.

The Stūpa of Bharhut was sixtyseven ft. eight and a half inches in diameter at the base but only a very small portion was left when Cunningham visited it in 1873, viz. 10 ft. in length and 6 ft. in height. This portion was on the southeast side and contained rows of small recesses (13½ in. broad at top, 4½ in. at bottom and 8½ to 9 in. apart) for lights (*dīpamālā*) of which the number for whole of the Stūpa seemed to have been about 120 for 600 lights in each row. The whole Stūpa was built of plain bricks of 12″ × 12″ × 3½″ size, some large ones being 5″ to 6″ thick. The height of the Stūpa could not be ascertained but its form with the dome and the *harmikā* can be made out from the several replicas engraved in relief on railings. The original Stūpa was made of plain bricks and stood on a strong foundation of solid stone blocks. Round the Stūpa on the ground floor stood the magnificent inner railing consisting of

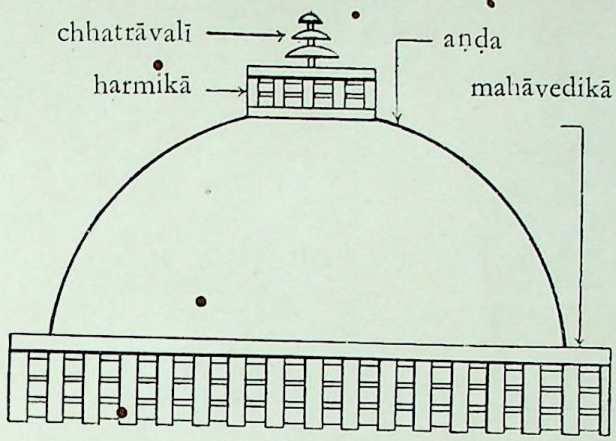


Fig. 54

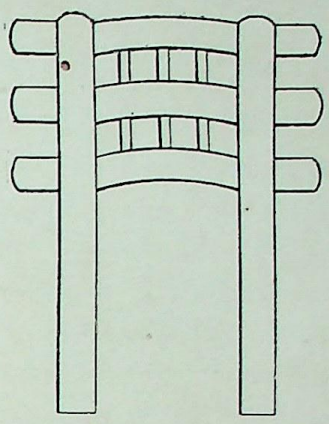


Fig. 56

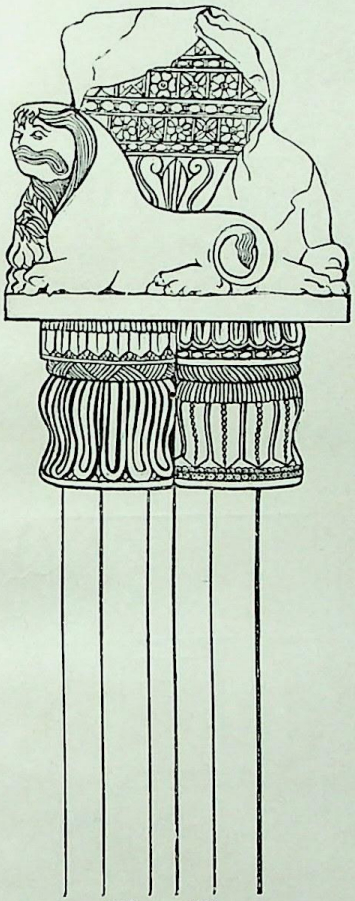


Fig. 58

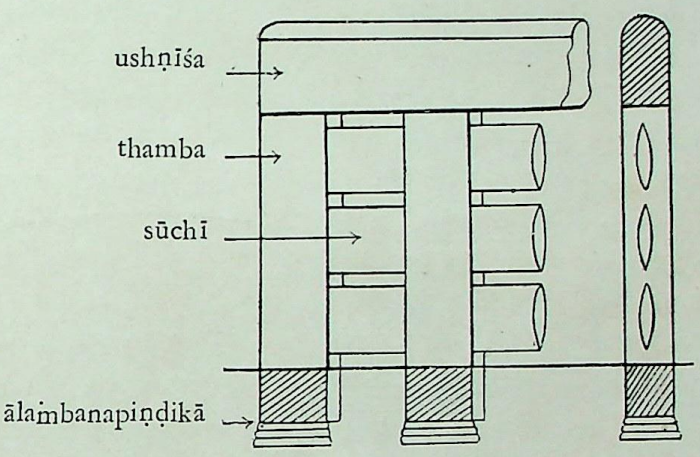


Fig. 55

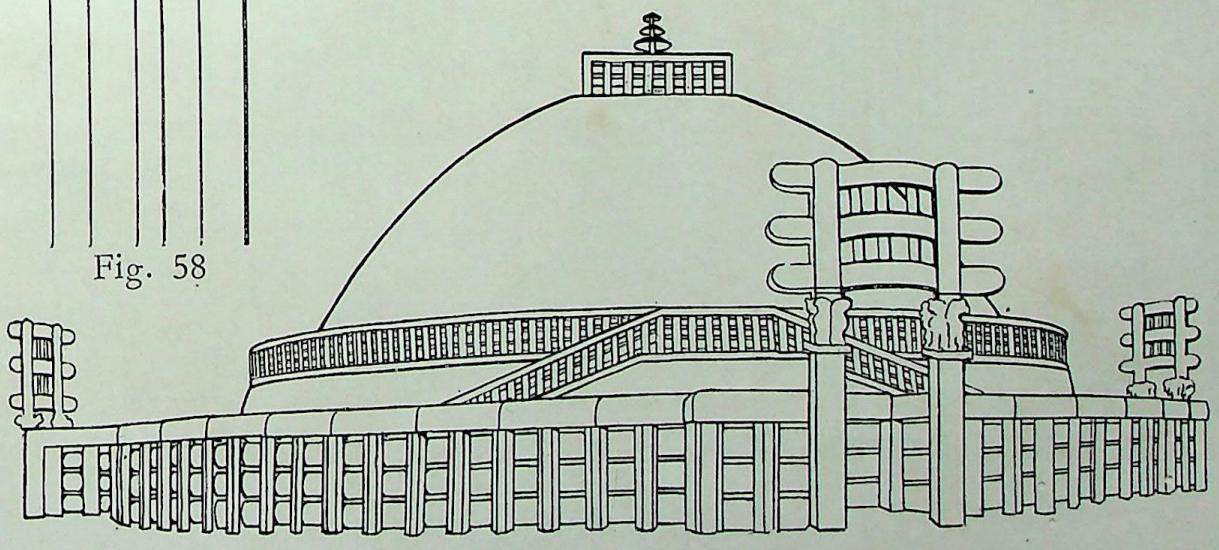


Fig. 57

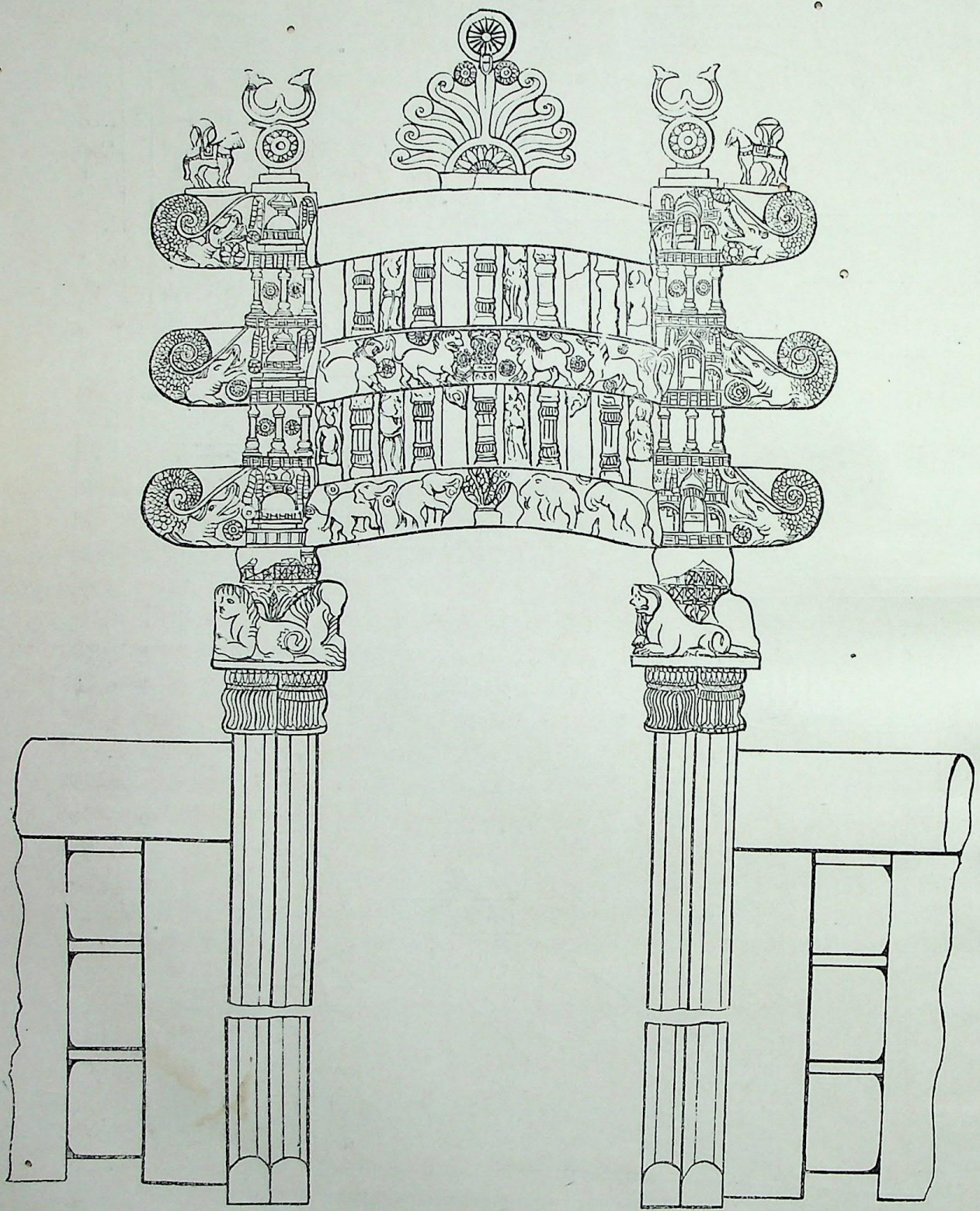


Fig. 59

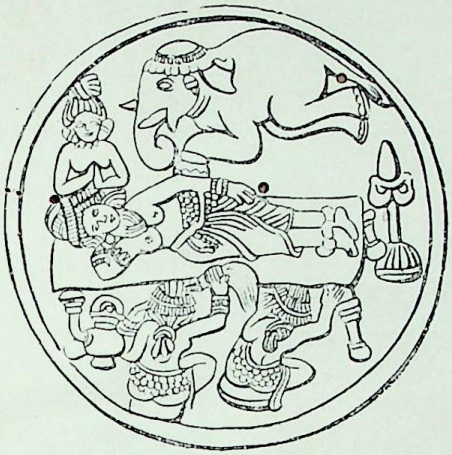


Fig. 61

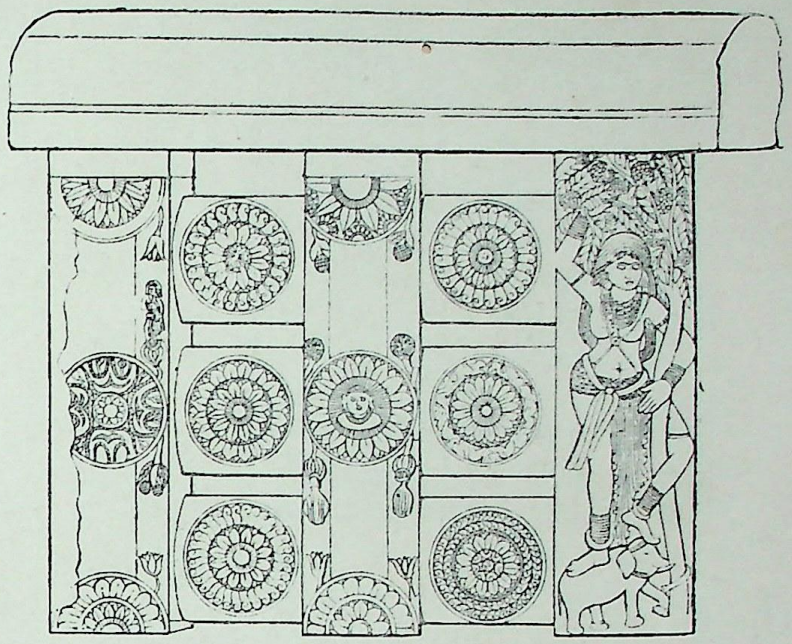
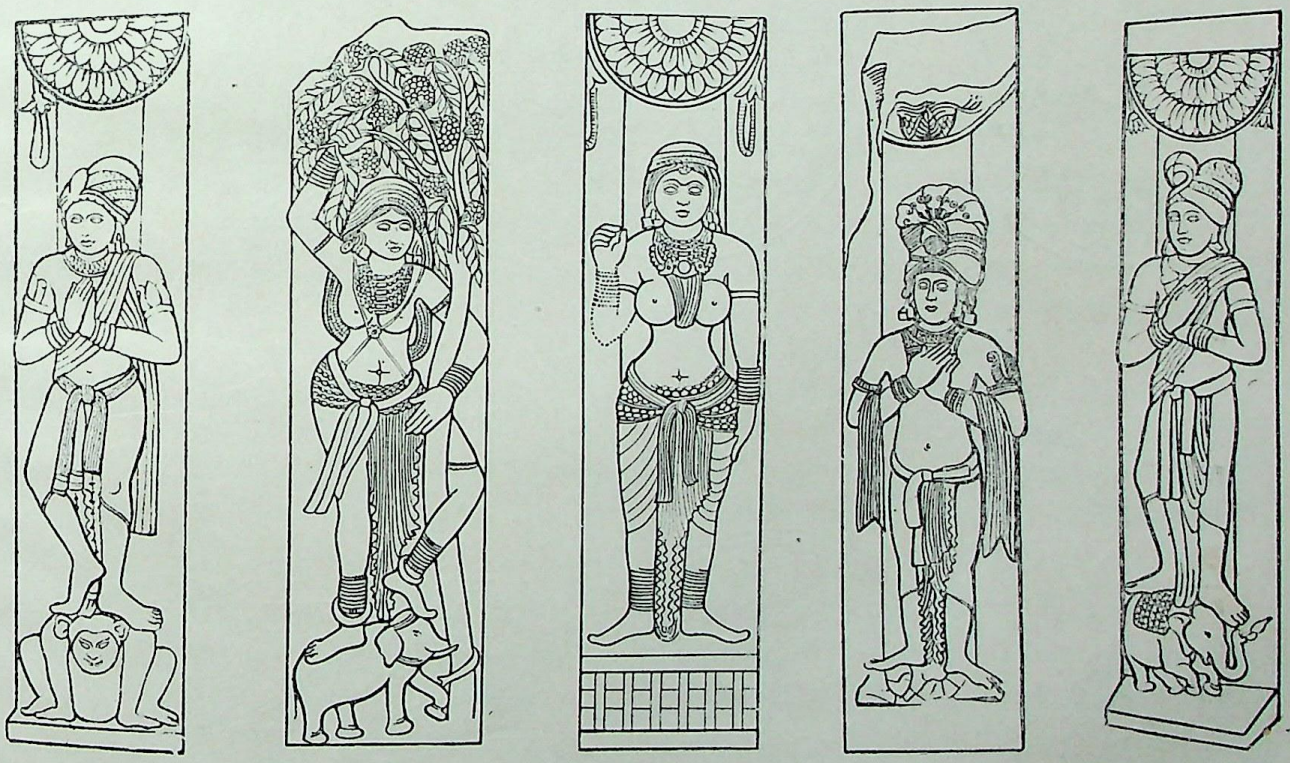
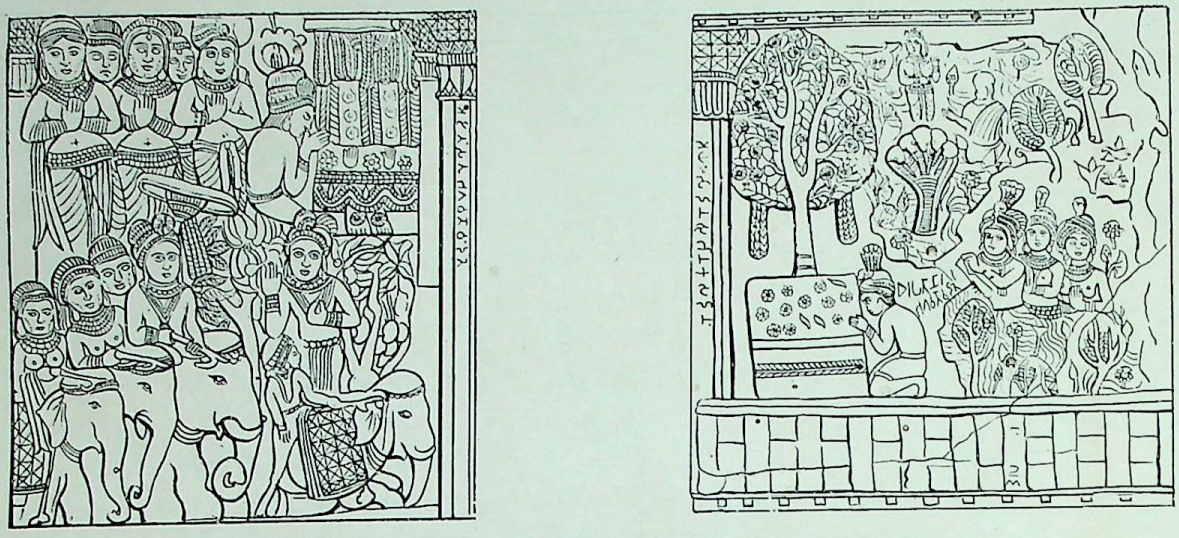


Fig. 60



a b c d e

Fig. 62



a Fig. 63 b

a Fig. 64 b Fig. 65

i

ii

Fig. 67 a

Fig. 66

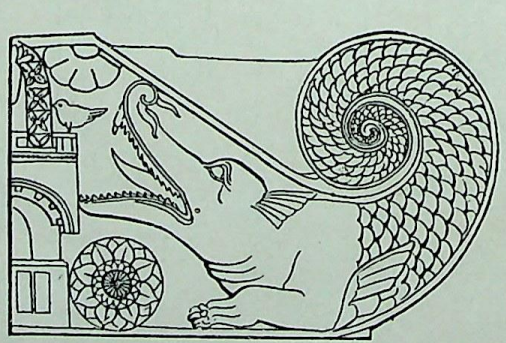


Fig. 67 b

four quadrants and four gateways facing the four cardinal points. The *pradakshiṇā-patha* between the Stūpa and railing had a terrace 10′ 4″ wide. In all there were 80 upright pillars each 7′ 1″ in height with a coping on the top (7′ in length, 1′ 10″ in height, 1′ 8″ in width, total length of the copings 330 ft.) raising the height of the railing to about 9 ft. Between each pair of the uprights (*sthambha*) were fixed three cross-bars (*sūchī*) (1′ 11¼″ in length, 1′ 10½″ in breadth, with a thickness of 6″; in all 228 cross-bars). There were sixteen pillars in each quarter portion of the railing with four additional pillars in the return-screen in front of each gateway. Each *toraṇa* gateway comprised of two tall pillars which supported an imposing superstructure of three parallel architraves with spiral projecting ends on the two sides and separated from each other by square stone blocks and the horizontal space between each pair of such curved beams was filled by smaller pillars. The detailed architectural scheme has been described by Cunningham and discussed by Barua. Cunningham found 47 pillars of the original railing, 35 on the spot and 12 from the neighbouring villages of Baṭanmārā and Pathorā and 16 out of 40 coping stones. Pt. Brijmohan Vyās has added to the collection of the Allahabad Municipal Museum 53 pieces from the Bharhut *Toraṇa-Vedikā*. They included 32 pillars, one corner pillar with a front and side face, three cross bars, 14 coping stones, one fragment of a capital, 2 other blocks and a stairway. The stony frame-work of the gateways although seemingly slender has justified the principle of construction and joinery underlying it by its preservation until wilful spoliation by the hand of man brought it down for quarrying stone and bricks. The shape of the dome although only a fragment few feet in length now remains, could be known from three or four bas-reliefs on the sculptures. It shows that the original big Stūpa was hemispherical resembling a bell (*ghaṇṭākāra*) in which the ratio of the diameter to the height is less than in the case of subsequent Stūpas. The same is true of the Sanchi Stūpa. But later on there was a tendency towards cylindrical shape, which was rightly compared to a giant bubble (*mahābubbula*, Mahā-vaṁsa 30. 13), as also shown by the illustration of the monuments preserved on their railing or carved slabs. A bas-relief on one of the longer rails gives a good representation of the cylindrical base, with the addition of a regular railing in the usual position surrounding the Stūpa at an about distance. On the top of the hemisphere there was a square platform, also decorated with the Buddhist railing which supported the crowning umbrella, with streamers and garlands suspended from its rim. Large flowers also spring from the top as well as from the base of the square summit, and a cylindrical ornament is hung in undulating folds completely round the hemisphere.

The round railing consisting of 80 upright pillars in all was divided into four quadrants and having four high gateways, *Mahā-toraṇa*, each facing a cardinal point. This was planned in accordance with a religious principle in which cosmic manifesta-

tion was conceived as a gigantic *svastika* formed by the four directions of space and known as *Diśāvrata*. This doctrine had come into existence in the Vedic period and persisted as a popular cult in which the worship of the four Mahārājika Devas was a cardinal theme as found in the planning of the Bharhut railings. At no stage in the history of the Stūpa the latter could divest itself of this basic religious belief of its fourfold division.

The two tall pillars of each gateway (*toraṇa-dvāra*) rose to a height of 9′ 7½″; those on the east to west were comprised of four octagonal shafts (*aṭṭhaṁsika stambha*) joined together, with those on the north and south gateways square (*chaturasrika*) in form. These curiously shaped pillars, are thus formed of a group of four octagons or tetragons joined together, and crowned by four distinct bell-capitals. These four capitals are covered by a single abacus on which rests a large massive capital formed of two winged lions (*sapaksha-siṁha-saṅghāṭa*) and two winged bulls (*sapaksha-vṛisha-saṅghāṭa*). [Fig. 58]. On them rested the first horizontal architrave superimposed by two more beams of similar shape and size separated from each other by carved cubical blocks. A particular feature of the *toraṇa* beams at Bharhut consists in the open-mouthed crocodile figures with curved tails occupying the projecting ends. It was on this account that the *toraṇa* itself was given the name of *śiṁśumāraśiraḥ* (Ādi Parva, 176. 15, see my articles, 'Śiṁśumāraśiraḥ', *JISOA* 1939 ; 'Mahābhārata Notes', *ABOI*, Vol. XXVI, pts. III-IV, 283-86). The spaces between these architraves were filled by smaller balusters which gave the whole framework the appearance of a delicate jālī work (*śalākā-vātāyana*). [Fig. 59]. The topmost architrave was surmounted by a conspicuous Dharmachakra supported on a base of honeysuckle design and this was on the two sides at the uppermost height of the vertical pillars flanked by two smaller triratna symbols. Cunningham was able to restore these pinnacle symbols from existing fragments.

The upright pillars, cross-bars and copings of the Bharhut railings were elaborately carved with numerous scenes in bas-relief, some of them of Buddhist inspiration but others mostly from folk beliefs and well known decorative *repertoire* of early Indian art. Each series of two pillars held between it three cross-bars, and bonded at the top by coping stones (*Ushṇīśa* ; Pāli : *Unhīsa*). The coping, or continuous architrave, which crowned the circle of pillars, is formed of massive blocks of stone each spanning two intercolumniations. The blocks are upwards of 7 ft in length, with a height of 1 ft 10½ in. and a thickness of 1 ft 8 in. They are secured firmly to each other by long tenons fitting into corresponding mortices, and to the tops of the pillars by a stout tenon on each, which fits a socket on the underside of the coping stone. Each block is, of course, slightly curved to suit the circumference of

the circle, and this curvature must have added considerably to the stability of the railing ; for as each set of three tenons formed a triangle, each coping stone became an efficient tie to keep the three pillars on which it was set in their places. The entire length of the coping was 330 ft. including the returns, the whole of which was minutely and elaborately sculptured, both inside and outside. The inner face of the copings was carved over with the scenes of various Jātakas and of the flowers, fruits, necklaces, ear-rings and other personal ornaments and costly textiles, as well as many other things. On the outer face all the spaces marked off by the undulations are filled with repetitions of full-blown lotus flowers on account of which the railing received the name of *padmavara-vedikā*. This broad line of bas-reliefs is on both faces finished by two rich borders, the lower one consisting of a continuous row of bells (*kiṅkiṇī-jāla*) and the upper one of battlement motifs (*kapiśīrshaka* or *prākāra-kaṇṭhaka*). The carvings are bold and deep and still as sharp and perfect as when first set up. [Fig. 60].

The pillars of the Bharhut railing are monoliths, called *thabho* (Skt. *sthaṁbha*), being 7′1″ in height, with a section of 1′10½″ on the face and 1′2½″ on the side. The corners have been slightly bevelled so as to make them octagonal or *aṭṭhaṁsika* as described in ancient literature. They are ornamented by a full medallion in the middle, and by a half-medallion at top and bottom, all of which were described as *padma, nīlotpala, puṇḍarīka* and other synonyms of the lotus flower or its compositions of petals, buds, sepals and leaves. There are also several animals and a considerable number of scenes taken from Buddhist legends and history. A few are adorned with single figures of Yakshas, Nāgas and Devatās and in one case a boldly carved soldier. There are several Jātakas also on the pillars with their labels inscribed on them. One scene illustrates the conception of Māyā Devī with the approach of the white elephant (*Utkrānti*). [Fig. 61]. There are also representations of the six Bodhi trees on the pillars of the six different Buddhas with their respective names inscribed on them.

The scalloped or bevelled edges on the pillars, which seem to have been copied from the wooden originals add greatly to the decorative enrichment of the whole railing, are occupied with figures of fruits and flowers and human figures both male and female, standing on flower bosses with their hands either placed in adoration or reaching upwards for fruits. On some pillars the flowers bear elephants, winged horses, monkeys or peacocks, while parrots and squirrels hang from the branches and nibble the fruits.

The ornamentation of the corner pillars of the entrance is quite different from that of the others. The pillars of the inner corners generally bear figures of Yakshas

and Yakshiṇīs, Devatās and Nāgarājas, to whom was entrusted the guardianship of the four entrances; e. g. on the north gate Kubera Yaksha and Chandrā Yakshī and on the south gate Nāgarāja Chakravāka and Chulakokā Devatā. [Fig. 62]. On the two outer corner pillars the faces are divided into three registers, separated by Buddhist railings and occupied with scenes or legends in the life of the Buddha, e.g. the historical scenes showing the visit of Ajātaśatru to Buddha, Nāgarāja Elāpatra kneeling at the foot of the Bodhi tree, visit of King Prasenajit of Kosala to the shrine of the Dharmachakra, worship of the Aśvattha and the Banyan trees of Gautama and Kāśyapa Buddhas respectively by wild elephants, etc. [Fig. 63].

An important element in the architecture of the great railing is the cross-bars (*sūchī*) three of which were fitted between each pair of pillars. The total number of cross-bars in the railing was 228 of which about 80 were found. The cross-bar measures 1′ 11¾″ in length by 1′ 10½″ in breadth with a thickness of 6″. The rails are beautified by circular bosses or medallions on each side, sculptured with various subjects, similar to those of the medallions of the pillars. There are few Jātakas amongst them but they present a variety of humorous scenes and flowered ornaments of sheer richness and beauty. [Fig. 64]. The rail-bars of the four entrances owing to the wider intercolumniation of the pillars, were considerably longer than those of the main railings, and their faces were occupied by oblong panels showing religious scenes such as worship of the Stūpa, the Bodhi tree and the Dharmachakra.

PRADAKSHIṆĀPATHA :—The Stūpa was surrounded by a path of circumambulation (*Pradakshiṇāpatha*) 10′ 4″ wide which lay between the great railing and the Stūpa. The whole of this space was covered with a thick flooring of lime plaster, which has lasted well even to the present day. The outer edge of the floor was finished by a line of curved curb stones, cut exactly to the circumference of the inner circle of the railing ; and the pillars were set against the curb stones which just touched the diameter of the lower half medallions. The foot of each pillar, which was quite rough, rested on a square block laid directly on the earth. The terraced floor (*pratikaṇṭhukā*) was continued alround the outside of the railing for a width of several feet.

OUTER RAILING :—The excavations also brought to light the remains of a second stone railing of much smaller dimensions of which each pillar was 2′ 1″ in height with a breadth of 7″ and a coping 7″ in height, the total height of the outer railing being 3′ 3″. Only two pillars and no less than ten specimens of coping were found but there must have been about 240 of these smaller pillars and about 750 of cross-bars most of which have disappeared. This outer railing of which the pillars

were also carved, was added at a much later date most probably during the Kushāṇa period.

DETAILS OF SCULPTURE :—The subjects represented in the Bharhut sculpture include about twenty Jātaka scenes, half a dozen historical scenes, more than thirty statues in high relief of Yaksha and Yakshiṇīs, Devatās and Nāgarājas,—one half of which are inscribed with their names, and representations of animals and trees. On about half of the full medallions with other objects, there are boats, horse chariots and bullock carts besides several kinds of musical instruments, and a great variety of flags, standards and other symbols of royalty. About one half of the full medallions of the cross-bars and all of the half medallions of the pillars are filled with flowered ornaments of singular beauty and delicacy of design. The sculptures may be classified as follows :

A. Superhuman Beings :
   1. Yakshas 2. Devatās
   3. Nāgas 4. Apsarasas

B. Human Beings :
   1. Royal persons 2. Religious persons.

C. Animals.

D. Trees and Fruits.

E. Sculptured Scenes in bas-relief :
   1. Jātaka stories (more than 20 in number)
   2. Historical scenes (nearly six)
   3. Miscellaneous scenes—Inscribed
   4. Miscellaneous scenes—Uninscribed
   5. Humorous scenes.

F. Objects of Worship :
   1. Stūpas
   2. Wheels (*Dharmachakra*)
   3. Bodhi-trees
   4. Foot-prints (*pādukā* ; *Buddha pādukā*)
   5. *Triratna* symbol.

G. Decorative ornaments.

H. Buildings.

1. Palaces. 2. *Puṇyaśālā* or religious houses. 3. *Vajrāsana* or *Bodhi-maṇḍa* 4. Pillars. 5. Hermitage for ascetics. 6. Dwelling houses. Besides these there are vehicles, furnitures, utensils and musical instruments.

SUPERHUMAN BEINGS:—Yakshas—The religious significance and antiquity of the worship of the Yakshas have already been discussed under folk arts (pp. 114. 118). There is clear and overwhelming evidence that the cult of the four regions of space formed an important item in the religious beliefs of the people, the four regions being placed under the guardianship of one deity as Savitā on the west, east, north and south (*Savitā paśchātāt, Savitā purastāt, Savitottarāttāt, Savitādharāttāt*, RV. 10.36.14), or under different deities as Agni on the east, Indra on the south, Varuṇa on the west, Soma on the north, Vishṇu in the centre and Bṛihaspati above (AV. 3.27.1-6; 12 3. 55-60). The followers of this cult were known as Diśāvratika or *Diśāpokkhiya*. According to the Bhagavatī Sūtra a devotee of this cult in Hastināpura worshipped Soma in the east, Yama in the south, Varuṇa in the west and Vaiśravaṇa in the north. Another adherent did the same at Vārāṇasī. This drew within its fold the cult of the four Mahārājika gods with which was associated the whole conception of the fourfold cosmos or *Dik-Svastika* in popular belief, which was given a concrete form in the architectural planning of the Stūpa and its railing. We find frequent reference to the Chātummahārājika gods in Buddhist literature presiding over the four directions of space and it is thus quite natural that the builders of the earliest Buddhist Stūpas have given the most conspicuous place to these four deities on the four gateways as follows:

According to the Buddhist cosmogony the place of Dhṛitarāshṭra and the Gandharvas occupies the east side of the *Yugandhara* rock, that of Virūḍhaka and the Kumbhāṇḍas the south, that of Virūpāksha and the Nāgas the west, and that of Vaiśravaṇa and his Yakshas the north. These four guardians of the four quarters form as it were a *Rakshā-Pañjara*, apotropaic hegemony entrusted to the care of all the popular deities classified as Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kumbhāṇḍas (ithyphallic dwarf) and Nāgas. This arrangement is perfectly preserved in the Sanchi Stūpa. Two of these were found by Cunningham in the Bharhut Stūpa also, viz. Kubera on the north (*Kupiro-yakho*) and Virūḍhaka on the south. On the north gateway the figures of *Ajakālaka Yaksha* (some bucolic deity) and Chandrā Yakshī were found on the pillars associated with that of Kubera. On the eastern gateway was found the figure of Sudarśanā Yakshī and in the south gateway were found carved on the pillars in addition to Virūḍhaka Yaksha the figures of Gaṅgita Yaksha and Chakravāka Nāgarāja. On the western gateway were figures of Suchiloma Yaksha and Sirimā Devatā on one pillar and on a second the figure of Supāvasa Yaksha. Dhṛitarāshṭra was the deity of the east side but pillar bearing his sculpture has disappeared. There is however a corner pillar bearing the figure of Sudarśanā Yakshī which should have belonged to the east way. We thus see that the Bharhut Stūpa on the basis of its

labels presents a more extended scheme of the tutelary deities which were once common in folk belief and admitted in the conception of the Stūpa.

2. DEVATĀS: The Devatā figures sculptured on the pillars are all female divinities, viz. Sirimā Devatā, Chulakokā Devatā and Mahākokā Devatā. Sirimā (Sans: *Śrī-Mā*) was the same as Śrī-Lakshmī, the ancient goddess of fertility and wealth for whom we have the famous Śrī-Sūkta (an apocryphal of the Ṛigveda). An important feature of her representation is the stiff pose of the splayed feet as found on the gold leaf figures of mother goddesses and on a number of other small figurines on the ring stones which belong to the worship of the *Śrī-Chakra*. It has also been suggested that Sirimā was the same goddess as *Māyā* or *Māiā* (Sans: *Mātṛikā*). She was once known as Māyā Devatā (Sundarakāṇḍa, 2.49) or simply as Devatā (Sundarakāṇḍa, 30.2; Sabha Parva also). At least three representations of the Goddess Śrī-Lakshmī standing and seated on a full blown lotus springing from a Pūrṇaghaṭa and bathed by elephants are dipicted at Bharhut. [Fig. 65].

The word *Chula* was derived from Sanskrit *Kshudra*, meaning small in contrast to *Mahā* big and the two *Kokā* Devatās were elder and younger sister divinities. The word *Kokā* means a lizard, a ruddy goose, a wolf, and a frog. It appears that in association with the Mother Goddess the house lizard was more commonly depicted on the ring stones and the same meaning is implied here. The figure of Mahākokā was not available to Cunningham but was recently traced by Pt. B. M. Vyās as preserved in the palace of the ruler of Nagod.

3. NĀGAS:—Similar to the Yaksha and Śrī Lakshmī Devatā cults the Nāgas also were accepted as an element in the religious form of the Stūpa. They are mentioned as the guardian deities (*Rakshitā*). Amongst the five *Rakshā-Maṇḍalas* of the Sudarśana City in Uttarakuru visited by Māndhātā there is one presided over by the Nāga chief emerging out of waters (Udaka-niśrita). At Bharhut the figure of Erāpata Nāgaraja is shown worshipping the Bodhi Tree with his family and is half submerged in water. Iconographically he is represented as a human being with a canopy of hoods similar to the Nāga figures of Kushāṇa and later arts. On a pillar, now in the Allahabad Museum in the central medallion is a Banyan Tree below which is the five hooded Muchulinda Nāgarāja, as shown by the epigraph, sheltering an altar and the footprints of the Buddha. Muchulinda is said to have protected the Buddha during a storm. The story is depicted at Sanchi, Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda Stūpas also. The Nāga King Chakravāka is carved on the corner pillar of the south gate.

4. APSARASAS:—A fourth class of semi-divine beings shown in the sculpture is that of Apsarasas engaged in dance and music. Urvaśī and Śachī are mentioned

in the Ṛigveda and several others in the Yajurveda accompanying the solar car in a festive dance. At Bharhut four of them are depicted, viz. Alambusā, Miśrakeśī, Sudarśanā and Subhadrā. The scene itself is labelled as *Sāḍika sammadaṁ turaṁ devānāṁ*, where *Sāḍika* is the same as *Saṭṭaka* (a spring festival), *sammada*, performance of joy, *turaṁ* as *tūrya*, play of instrumental music in the assembly of gods (*devānāṁ*).

B. Human Beings

1. Royal Persons :—King Prasenajit of Kosala is depicted as paying a visit to the Buddha. He is seated in his chariot and arrives at the head of a procession. In the sculpture we find the representation of the famous *Puṇyaśālā* which Prasenajit had erected in the city of Śrāvastī for the use of the Buddha. It is a two-storied building the lower part of which is an open-pillared hall for the establishment of the Buddhist Dharmachakra; the upper storey being the *Puṇyaśālā* itself furnished with two gateways and a railing.

Ajātaśatru is represented as visiting the Buddha and coming seated on an elephant at the head of a long procession. The king dismounts from the elephant and pays homage with folded hands to the throne of the Buddha. The scene is labelled as *Ajātasattu Bhagavato Vaṁdate.*

2. Religious Persons :—The sculptures include figures of ascetics (*parivrājaka*) wearing matted locks and bark garments; fire altars point out that the ascetics were fire worshippers. One of them labelled *dīrghatapasī* shows a great Vedic teacher with his pupils receiving instruction in Vedic recitation. These figures show that the sculptors were quite competent to depict religious mendicants in their traditional garb and atmosphere of an *Āśrama* and if the artists had been asked to portray the Buddha in a human form they could have easily done so.

C. Animals :—Two kinds of animals, natural and fabulous, are shown. The motif of the fabulous animals like the winged lion, winged horse, griffin, was quite ancient in Indian literature. In Bharhut we find a fish-tailed elephant (*jaleḅha* or *jala-hasti*) and crocodile with a fish tail as well as a winged horse (*balāhaka-aśva*). We find fourteen quadrupeds, six kinds of birds, snake, crocodile, tortoise, lizard and frog. The quadrupeds include the lion, elephant, horse, rhinoseros, wild goat, bull, deer, buck, wolf, monkey, cat, dog, sheep, hare and a squirrel. The birds comprise the cock, parrot, peacock, goose, wild duck and quail. The representation of all these animals is correct and spirited. The artists have been most successful in the treatment of monkeys and elephants whose poses and attitudes are delineated with a perfect natural charm.

In this connection Bharhut sculptures are unique in depicting humorous scenes showing actions of monkeys in contact with men and elephants. A scene inside a circular medallion shows a giant *Yaksha* as the principal figure in the composition seated on a low backed chair and wearing a huge turban and ornaments. With the help of a gigantic forceps pulled by an elephant the monkeys plucked the hair from inside the nostrils of the Mahā-Yaksha. Two other scenes represent the capture of a wild elephant by monkeys who lead him along in a triumphal procession. Another scene shows a huge sea-monster (*Mahātimiṅgala*) with widely opened mouth in the act of swallowing a boat with its crew of three men. The picture of the boat with its zigzag cut long planks, dowel joints, the oars and rudder is interesting.

OBJECTS OF WORSHIP :—At Bharhut there is no trace of image worship but we find veneration of the Stūpa, Dharmachakra, Bodhi Vṛiksha, Charaṇa Pādukā, Buddha's hair and turban and the Triratna symbols. According to Buddhist tradition Stūpas were of three kinds : *Śārīrika*, i. e. bodily relic of the Buddha, e.g. bones, ashes, pairings of hair and nails ;

2. UDDEŚIKA, i. e. Stūpas erected for the sake of the Buddha.

3. PĀRIBHOGIKA, i. e. Stūpas over the articles of Buddha's personal use ; e. g. Bodhi-Maṇḍa or Buddha's seat, Bhikshā-Pātra or his turban (*chūḍa*) for which a festival was celebrated in the Sudharmā-deva-sabhā.

JĀTAKA SCENES :—The Jātaka is a birth story in the previous life of the Buddha. These were extremely popular and included a number of folk tales. Later on under Mahāyānic inspiration some of them were elaborated as *Avadāna* stories of great length. The Jātakas are represented at Bharhut, Sanchi, Mathura, Gandhara and Amaravati. The following Jātakas have been identified at Bharhut :

1. Miga Jātaka ; 2. Nāga Jātaka ; 3. Yavamajakiya Jātaka ; 4. Muggapakaya Jātaka ; 5. Laṭuvā Jātaka ; 6. Chhadantiya Jātaka ; 7. Isisiṅgiya Jātaka ; 8. Yambumane Avayesi Jātaka ; 9. Kuruṅgamiga Jātaka ; 10. Haṁsa Jātaka ; 11. Kiṁnara Jātaka; 12. Asadṛisa Jātaka ; 13. Dasaratha Jātaka ; 14. Isimiga Jātaka ; 15. Uda Jātaka ; 16. Sechchha Jātaka ; 17. Sujātogahuto Jātaka ; 18. Biḍāla-Kukkuṭa Jātaka ; 19. Magadeviya Jātaka ; 20. Bhisa Haraniya Jātaka ; 21. Vidurapaṇḍita Jātaka ; 22. Gaja-sasa Jātaka ; 23. Vessantara Jātaka.

The architectural forms and religious contents of the Bharhut Stūpa focus attention on the origins and meanings behind this earliest monument of its kind. On the architecural side as explained above, the Stūpa was a complete symbol of the ancient Vedic conception of the cosmos in its fourfold manifestation, as accepted in its entirety by the traditional religious beliefs of the people. As such the Stūpa

was a substitute of the sacrificial Yūpa in all its details. This correspondence has been set forth above (pp. 120-22). In the Vedic scheme the topmost portion of the Yūpa was the seat of the Gods which corresponds to the *harmikā* on the truncated flat top of the Stūpa, in the centre of which was raised a post named Yūpa-yashṭi mentioned even in such a late text as the Divyāvadāna. The three parasols on this staff correspond to the three heavens of Vedic conception. Similarly the three *vedikās* or railings round the three *medhis* correspond to the three worlds(*lokas*). The four entrances in the four cardinal points mark the *svastika* pattern of creation which were accepted as early as the Ṛigveda. They were later on elaborated in the Purāṇic conception of *Sumeru* on the one hand and of the Anavapata Lake and the Simeru Mountain of the Buddhists on the other. The ideal Dharma City of the Chakravartī Sovereign corresponds exactly to these fourfold conceptions of the four gateways in the four directions. This fourfold division became linked with the *Disāvrata* cult on the one hand and the Yaksha, Nāga, Kumbhāṇḍa and Gandharva divinities on the other. The Vedikā was a familiar structure round the fire altar in the Vedic times and formed an essential element of construction of the sacrificial pavilion. Its original wooden form was transferred to the stone medium in the case of the monumental Stūpas. Thus all the architectural elements in the making of the Stūpa were borrowed from earlier times and are fully exemplified in the case of the Bharhut Stūpa. In the words of the Buddha himself the Stūpa monument was of hoary antiquity and there may be no doubt that its architectural form was the outcome of continuous evolution from primitive mounds of earth with a wooden log inserted in the centre to complex structures as developed at Bharhut.

The religious formation of the Stūpa was a much more complex affair for which complete evidence is available in the Bharhut sculptures. Here we find a number of strands forming an organic whole which stands out as the complete symbol of the religious faith of a whole community integrated by common beliers traditionally handed down from the ancient-most times and accepted in simple faith A list of these religious cults as given in Jaina and Buddhist literature includes the following : — Rukkha maha, Giri maha Nadī maha, Sāgara maha, Chaitya maha, Thūpa maha, Suruja maha, Chanda maha, Yakkha maha, Nāga maha, Bhūta maha, Vishṇu maha, Skanda maha, Brahma maha, Dhanur maha, Diśā maha, Koṭṭakiriyā maha and many other names under the title of *Deva-vratas*, etc.

It is clear that the religious world sculptured at Bharhut partakes of these cults of deities in an atmosphere of joy and freedom. As part of the Vṛiksha maha or tree-worship, we have a series of panels showing worship of the following Bodhi trees of the six Buddhas : 1. Aśvattha or Pīpal, (*ficus religiosa*), known as the Bodhi

Tree of Gautama Buddha. The Bodhi Tree is worshipped by royal persons, common citizens, elephants, Nāgas, etc. It is placed in a railing and at times the Bharhut sculptor has conceived its shrine (*Bodhighara*) as a building of great beauty with an open pavilion below and a domed top above with railings in both storeys.

2. Banyan Tree (*ficus indica*), Bodhi Tree of Kāśyada Buddha ; in several scenes it is depicted in a charming manner specially where a group of elepahnts are paying homage to this Tree, the scene being labelled as *Bahu Hatthiko Nigode*, i. e. the Nyagrodha tree of a herd of elephants.

3. Udumbara (*ficus glomerata*), Bodhi Tree of the Buddha Kanakamuni.

4. Pāṭali (*bignonia suaveolens*), Bodhi Tree of the Buddha Vipassin, whose name is inscribed above the medallion. The tree is depicted in full flowering state.

5. Śāla Tree (*shorea robusta*), Bodhi Tree of the Buddha Viśvabhū.

6. Śirīsha (*acacia sirisa*), Bodhi Tree of the Buddha Krakuchanda. All these trees are fortunately inscribed with the names of their respective Buddhas. These constituted an essential feature in the ancient cult of tree worship as adapted to the needs of Buddhism.

We also find here a side feature in the form of garden sports known as *Prāchāṁ Krīḍā* or *Udyāna Krīḍā* in which women are shown as standing under the various flowering trees, especially *Śāla* and *Aśoka* and enjoying such sports as *Śāla-bhañjikā, Aśoka-pushpa-prachāyikā*. These are depicted at Bharhut and continued in the railings of later times.

The Yaksha and Nāga cults in the *repertoire* of the Bharhut have a preponderating share. These are tutelary divinities which had a stronghold on the minds of the people, probably greater than that of Buddhism itself. The worship of the Nāgas and of the Yakshas was almost universal and has came down to our own modern times. The Stūpa of Bharhut, and for the matter of that all subsequent Stūpas, stand witness as to in what high esteem these two cults were held by the people. In the *Maha* list we have one called Vaiśravaṇa-maha, i. e. worship of the God Kubera and we have evidence of it in the important statue of Kupiro-Yakho. Similarly the worship of other godlings was associated with these two cults of Yakshas and Nāgas whose names have been found on their sculptures as pointed out above. There were many such deities whose names at Bharhut we know only by the accidental labels. The Gandharvas and the Apsarasas who go together both in Brāhmanical and Buddhist mythology formed an important section of the cult of tutelary deities and have found full acceptance at Bharhut in the numerous scenes of music and dance without which the sculputures will loose much of their gaiety. The authors of the religious

stone epic to be sculptured on the Stūpa were so much in love with and under the influence of the religion of the common people, rather than of Buddhism that an open admission of a large number of these common deities have become preserved. One such instance is the figure of Sirimā Devatā. In a list of the followers of different obscure religious cults we find the devotees of Śrī-Devatā, i. e. Goddess Śrī, who was the same as Śrī-Lakshmī, the ancientmost Mother Goddess referred to in the Vedas and conceived of as the consort of Nārāyaṇa. She was the daughter of the ocean showing her original connection with the Sāgara-maha and was accepted as the Goddess of Fertility and Abundance. In Bharhut figures she is depicted as being sprinkled over by two elephants and standing on a full blown lotus rising from a Pūrṇaghaṭa. This is invested with great meaning for the Full Vase with blooming lotus flowers and buds was accepted as a vivid symbol of the cosmos (*bhū-padma-kośa*) and the individual. In the Atharva we find mention of the Pūrṇa-kumbha-Nārī motif, the Full Vase Woman which seems to have taken the form of Śrī-Lakshmī standing on the Auspicious Jar and vitalising it with her immortal spirit. The Sirimā cult was accepted by the Buddhists, Jainas and the Hindus and was universal in each household, the Goddess being specially worshipped on the *Dīpāvalī* night. In Buddhist art she was accepted as the consort of Kubera side by side with Bhadrā. We find her depicted not only at Bharhut but also at Sanchī, Bodhagaya and in the Jaina caves at Udaigiri.

The worship of the sacred objects associated with the Buddha was a development of the religious *Maha* cults as shown by an actual label in which the Buddha's turban and hair are worshipped as *Chūḍāmaha*. The cult of the Dharmachakra Pillar under the name of *Skambha* or *Stambha* was known in the Vedic literature where the cosmic pillar, *axis mundi*, is described in the Skambha Sūktas (AV. 10. 7 & 8). It was also a popular cult in which the pillar topped by an animal like elephant, lion or bull or a wheel is being circumambulated by worshippers, We find an example of the same at Bharhut. (Fig. 66). We find it repeated at Mathurā also. The worship of the Chakra or Wheel was a traditional cult which originally was associated with Vishṇu (RV. 1.155.6) but later on also became the principal Buddhist symbol. At Bharhut we find several charming scenes of the Chakra worship with the label : *Bhagavato Dhammachakam*. In this class also may be placed the cults of Foot-prints (*pādukā*) and Enlightenment Seat (*Bodhi-maṇḍa*) ; both of which as special *Maha* festivals derived from earlier origins coming under the influence of Buddhism.

The association of a pillar with a religious shrine was an ancient feature. The pillar was identified with Brahman itself against a cosmic background. It was installed in every Yajña as Yūpa or sacrifical pillar. The idea of the Yajña-Yūpa was transferred to the religious shrine as Prāsāda-stambha or Deva-stambha erected in front

of temples. It was also associated with the funeral ground and became known as Śmaśāna-Yūpa or Chaitya-Yūpa, as seen in the Lauriā Nandangarh Mound. Thus a universal cult of *Stambha* worship (*Stambha-maha*) glorified the Pillar as a deity. This was a broadbased pantheon in which the pillar was topped by a wheel (*Chakra-stambha*) or by a lion (*Siṁha-stambha*) or by a Garuḍa (*Garuḍa-stambha*) or by the foliage and fruits of a palm tree (*Tāla-stambha*) or by a bull (*Vṛisha-stambha*). The Chakra-topped Pillar of Aśoka was a *Dharma-Stambha*. The popular cult of *Stambha, Skambha, Yashṭi, Lakuṭa, Dhvaja* and *Sthūṇā* received open admittance in the religious contents of a monumental Stūpa as seen at Bharhut, Sanchi, Mathura and Amaravati.

These ancient symbols appear singly or in combination ; e.g. the pillar with the wheel, the pillar with the lion, the Pūrṇa-kumbha with the Auspicious Woman or the Pillar with the Pūrṇa-ghaṭa. The representation of Śrī-Lakshmī standing on the mouth of the Full-Jar is depicted at Bharhut in its full glory. Śrī-Lakshmī is the Eternal Woman of auspicious mien, associated with an over-flowing pitcher. It was a motif of the Woman and the Full Vase which had continued through the ages and was depicted at Bharhut (*Pūrṇaṁ nāri prabhara kumbhametam*, AV. 3. 12. 8). The makers of the Stūpa symbolism tackled with the problem of depicting the Pillar, Full Vase, Mahā-Chakra, the Four Great Animals and the Eternal Woman or the Goddess and gave to each one of them either singly or in combined form a place in the decoration of the Stūpa. We find clear evidence of this in the Bharhut Stūpa. The people deciphered in the alphabat of the symbols the language which was near to their heart and well understood by them.

In this connection the cult of the Four Great Animals found a gushing admittance in the religious concept of the Stūpa. The Niddeśa referes to them as *Hasti-vrata, Aśva-vrata, Go-vrata, Suparṇa-vrata* amongst others and the Bharhut Stūpa shows these animals freely sculptured in a religious atmosphere. In one scene the deer and lions join in a Chaitya festival and in another the herd of elephants offers homage to the Banyan tree. These are not ordinary denizens of the forest but typical of creatures on the pilgrim's path of spiritual progress who had claims to the rank of a Bodhisattva. As deities presiding over particular *Vratas* or special cults, their religious significance in the Stūpa was an established fact.

The presence of the *Vṛishabha-machchha* [Fig. 67 a], *Śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ* [Fig. 67 b], lotus rizome issuing from the mouth of a pot bellied Yaksha [Fig. 67 c] or from his navel [Fig. 67 d] or disposed round a female figure [Fig. 67 e] or a series of full-blown lotuses—these represent marine motifs and water symbology which were certainly associated with the religious cults and formed an essential part of the

assemblage of Stūpa symbolism. Some of these motifs are found depicted on ancient ring-stones ; e. g. band of moving elephants [Fig. 67 f] or fabulous winged lions [Fig 67 g].

The lotus flowers with buds and leaves and creepers play an important part in the decoration of a Stūpa. A series of lotus medallions are depicted on the upright posts and cross-bars and the copings, owing to which the railing was given the name of *Padmavara-Vedikā* ; but the idea behind the decoration was that of a mammoth garland of a thousand lotus flowers named *kiñjalkinī* with which the whole body of the Stūpa and of its railing was decorated as a mark of worship. This took the form of a grand ceremonious decoration in which much labour and money was spent but which formed a real item in the ceremony of Stūpa worship and also in the worship of temples and images in later times.

One of the most important features of Stūpa decoration at Bharhut is the presence of meandering creepers showing ornaments and textiles and other objects of food and drink from the Kalpa-Vṛiksha trees or creepers in the Uttarakuru country. The true significance of this motif in the religious beliefs of her people has not yet been fully realised but the minds of the Bharhut masters were full with its significance for which they have accorded to it such a welcome.

Actually it represented the Kalpa-latā, the Wish-fulfilling Creeper of heavenly origin whose tendrils fulfil all desires by producing pairs of Man and Woman (*mithuna*), ornaments shown hanging from the boughs like earrings, necklaces, girdles, anklets, etc. which are represented in several shapes, costly textiles like scarves and *sārīs*, wines bottled in jars of jack-fruit form, technically known as *Panasa* and also mango-shaped pendent containers for the lac-dye to paint the feet of young ladies. [Fig. 68].

The latter two fruits have been specially selected because the strong odour of the ripe jack fruit resembles that of the wine and the juice of the mango fruit is like the *lākshā-rāga*. The motif of the Kalpavṛiksha or the Kalpa-latā belongs to the region of the Uttarakuru as found in the description given in the Mahāvāṇija Jātaka (493, 352).

A group of merchants who had set out in search of a treasure came to a mighty Banyan tree with cove and pleasant shade, from its eastward branch, pure and clear water trickled for them ; they washed and drank their fill of it. One of the branches on the south gave them all things to eat :

"Both rice and meat out in a stream it brings,

Thick porridge ginger lentls soup and many other things". From the western branch :

"Out came a bevy of fair girls all pranked in brave array,
And O, the robes of many hues ; jewels and rings in plenty !

Each merchant had a pretty maid, each of the five and twenty."

From the northern branch likewise :

"...out came a stream of gold,
Silver in handfuls, precious rings, and jewels manifold.
And roles of fine Benares cloth and blankets thick and thin,
The merchants then to roll them up in bundles did begin".

The following Pālī *gāthā* sums up the virtues of this auspicious tree :

"Vāridā purimā sākhā annapānachcha dakkhiṇā
Nāridā pachchhimā sākhā sabbakāme cha uttarā."

(Fausboell, Jāt. IV 362)

This flowery description of this idyllic land of Uttarakuru had been received from great antiquity, and is reinforced by the literary tradition recorded in the epic literature and Purāṇas. For example, in the Rāmāyaṇa, Sugrīva directs the monkey chiefs to go in quest of Sītā in the northern direction. There at the end of the earth they would find the land of the Uttarakurus. "Flowers of gold as resplendent as fire are seen there in eternal bloom imbued with divine fragrance. The beautiful trees produce garments of various kinds and costly gems which are pleasant for men and women to use in all seasons ; beds with beautiful coverlets and pleasing garlands, costly drinks and food of many descriptions and to crown this all, maidens endowed with beauty, virtue and youth".[1]

In the Mahābhārata the Elysian land of Uttarakuru with all kinds of plenty in fruits and flowers and with trees producing all objects of desire (*sarvakāma-phalāḥ vṛikshāḥ*) is conceived in the northern direction adjacent to Meru. There as fruits from trees are produced garments, ornaments and youthful pairs of men and women (*mithunāni*) who draw sustenance from the nectar-like milk of the milky trees and are

1. jātarūpamayaiśchāpi hutāśanasamaprabhaiḥ / nityapushpaphalāstatra nagāḥ patrarathākulāḥ // 43 //
divyagandharasasparśāḥ sarvān kamān sravanti cha/nānākārāṇi vāsāṁsi phalantyanye nagottamāḥ //44//
muktāvaidūryachitrāṇi bhūshaṇāni tathaiva cha / sastrīṇāṁ yānyarūpāṇi purushāṇām tathaiva cha//45//
sarvartusukhasevyāni phalantyanye nagottamāḥ / mahārhamaṇichitrāṇi phalantyanye nagottamāḥ//46//
śayanāni prasūyante chitrāstaraṇavanti cha / manḥkāntāni mālyāni phalantyatrāpare drumāḥ //47//
pānāni cha mahārhāṇi bhakshyāṇi vividhāni cha/ striyaścha guṇasampannā rūpayauvanalakshitāḥ//48//
Kishkindhākāṇḍa, ch. 43.

perfectly matched to each other in beauty, dress and appearance. The human beings in that region are happy and contented like the gods being free from all sorrows and ailments and they do not suffer the pangs of separation.[1]

It appears that this description of Uttarakuru was an inherent part of the Bhuvanakośa as we find it repeated in a similar context in the Vāyupurāṇa (chap. 45, verses 11-50). The description in the Purāṇa, besides recording what the Epic contains, is much more elaborate, and we find there references to streams of *Madhu* and *Maireya*, of butter and curds, to mountains of delicious food, to groves furnished with beds, seats, cosmetics, garlands, etc., and to a great many other items of pleasure. In that region there is sweet music of every description rising from lūte, flute and tabors, and hundreds and thousands of Kalpavṛikshas produce fine and beautiful garments agreable to wear.

The above tradition holds the key to many a scene on the gateways and railings of the great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi. For example, we find at Sanchi carved on the western face of the western pillar of the south gateway youthful couples engaged in music and pleasure surrounded by birds and animals and seated under the shade of boughs overladen with costly ornaments of many kinds. On the entrance to the cave at Bhājā the visit of king Māndhātā to Uttarakuru is illustrated with great elaboration including the garden of the Kalpavṛiksha trees and of the *Mithuna* couples enjoying dance and music. One of the trees in the scene is in the style of a true Kalpavṛiksha laden with many ornaments hanging from its branches. Another shows girls coming out of its boughs.

On the Bharhut Stūpa the Kalpavṛiksha is a recurrent theme of decoration as illustrated by Cunningham on plates XXXIX-XIVIII. These show various ornaments like ear-pendents of the *prākāra-vapra-kuṇḍala* type [Fig. 69 a], earrings of Triratna design [Fig. 69 b], collars, necklaces, girdles, wristlets, spiral finger-rings, spiral anklets [Fig. 69 c]. A beautiful armlet with triple rosettes above and a row of small pendent

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1. uttarāḥ kuravo rājan puṇyāḥ siddhanishevitāḥ // 2 //
tatra vṛikshā madhuphalā nityapushpaphalopamāḥ /
pushpāṇi cha sugandhāni rasavanti phalāni cha // 3 //
sarvakāmaphalāstatra kechidvṛikshā janadhipa /
apare kshīriṇo nāma vṛikshāstatra naradhipa // 4 //
ye ksharanti sadākshīraṁ shadrasaṁ chāmṛitopamam /
vastrāṇi cha prasūyante phaleśvābharaṇāni cha // 5 //
mithunāni cha jāyante striyaśchāpsarasopamāḥ /
teshāṁ tu kshīriṇaṁ kshīraṁ pibantyamṛitasannibham // 8 //
mithunaṁ jāyate kale samaṁ tachcha pravartate /
tulyarūpaguṇopetaṁ samaveśaṁ tathaiva cha // 9 // *Bhīshmaparva*, 7. 2-11.

bells below is a high watermark of Bharhut decorative art. Amongst fabrics we have specimens of scarves bearing floral designs and also female *sārīs*. In several of the meandering creepers of the Kalpalatā motif jack fruits and mango fruits are depicted, the former as containers of wine (*madhu*) and the latter of lac dye for painting the feet of ladies (*lākshārāga*) as referred to by Kālidāsa. Kālidāsa has given a graphic picture of the wishfulfilling trees growing in the capital of the Yaksha king :

Vāsaśchitraṁ madhu nayanayorvibhramā deśadakṣham pushpodbhedaṁ
saha kisalayairbhūshaṇānāṁ vikalpān |
Lākshārāgaṁ charaṇakamalanyāsayogyaṁ cha yasyāmekaḥ sūte
sakalamabalāmaṇḍanaṁ kalpavṛikshaḥ // Meghadūta, 2 | 11.

The Kalpavṛiksha alone provides all the dainties and fineries for the fair women of Alakā, coloured clothes for the body, intoxicating drinks for exciting glances of the eyes, and flowers for decorating the hair and ornaments of various designs and lac paint for the feet. The same tradition is also recorded by Bāṇa mentioning bunches of ornaments shooting forth from Wish-fulfilling creepers :

"*Parisphuradābharaṇasamūheneva kalpalatānivahena,*

(Kādambarī, Vaidya edition, p. 186).

The gift of such divine ornaments was considered as the highest blessing conferred on a human being hinted at by Kālidāsa :—

"*Kshaumaṁ kenachidindupāṇḍutaruṇā māṅgalyamāvishkṛitam*"

(*Śākuntalam, aṅka* 4)

The four kinds of female decorations comprised clothes, ornaments, flowery garlands and unguents, all of which were bestowed on them by heavenly trees. The idyllic land of Uttarakuru did not remain a dream but its symbolic significance extended to every home and caught popular imagination as a motif both in literature and art from earliest times right up to the classical period. The Kalpavṛiksha and Kalpalatā were motifs of vegetable kingdom which in actual life represented the loving male and female relatives, father, mother, brother and husband. For example, the father typified the branch that gave the ornaments ; the mother the bough offering fabrics ; the brother the tendril yielding unguents ; the female companions the off-shoots bestowing the lac dye for painting the feet ; and the husband the youthful sapling bent low to offer jugs of hilarious wine. The home or the land of Uttarakuru or the Kalpavṛiksha is the same producing all these auspicious blessings including the *Mithuna*, Man and Woman, the most auspicious symbol of them all. This, the land of Uttarakuru which was a heavenly region became mirrored as it were, in every home ; that which was an idea in heaven became concrete and manifest for the life of the individual

as Home or the Family (*gṛihastha*). This had been from the remote antiquity. The Indian ideal of life which no pessimistic or negative philosophy could eradicate, and naturally, therefore, the most important decorative motif on the railings and gateways of the great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi is the representation of the Elysium, named Uttarakuru, a land of complete happiness with all the wealth of its Wish-fulfilling trees and creepers. It was a place of the highest bliss which was the same as the Vedic *Nāka* and Buddhist *Sukhāvatī*, both implying a heaven completely free from sorrow and wants. It was a corollary of the positive view of life almost universally held in India that both in literature and art the Kalpavṛiksha motifs stand so preeminent with its deep symbolical significance. It was common to the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Bhāgavatas. In Jaina literature we read of ten kinds of Kalpavṛikshas—*madyāṅga-vṛiksha, turyāṅgavṛiksha, bhūshaṇāṅgavṛiksha, jyotivṛiksha* (self-luminous tree), *gṛiha-vṛiksha, bhājanaṅgavṛiksha* (for utensils), *dīpāṅgavṛiksha* (producing different lights), *vastrāṅgavṛiksha, bhojanāṅgavṛiksha, mālaṅga vṛiksha.*[1]

These idealised the ten kinds of highest pleasures (*daśavidha Mahābhoga*).

The Bharhut masters have gone into great length to illustrate the Kalpalatā motif producing ornaments, clothes, wines and lac-dye [Figs. 70-1]. For example, necklaces of three pearl strings [Fig. 72a], six strings [Fig. 72b], double *triratna* necklace pendent [Figs. 72c-d], flat studded chaplet [Fig. 72e], earrings with a flat cubical and ponderous top and a spiral lower portion named as *prākāra-vapra-kuṇḍala* [Fig. 69a], ear-rosettes [Fig. 72f], girdles [Figs. 72g-h], clustered spiral anklets [Fig. 69c], scarves [Fig. 72i], *Dhotī* [Fig. 72j], jack-fruit-shaped containers of wine [Figs. 70-71], mango-shaped containers of lac-dye [Figs. 70-71]. In one illustration [Fig. 73] we find pearl festoons, anklets and girdle hanging from the mouth, tusk and trunk of an elephant which was an ancient motif in royal palaces for display of ornaments.

All these scenes come under the general heading of Uttarakuru, a theme which played an important part in the religious merriment of the people and therefore seen at length in all the great Stūpas of early Indian art. A complete analysis of the scenes at Bharhut Stūpa shows an assemblage of the worship of the Bodhi trees, Bodhi Ghara Stūpa, Chakra, Gaja-Lakshmī, Pūrṇakumbha, ring-stone of Śrī-Chakra medallions showing figure of Śrī-Devī inside a band of lotuses or of lions or elephants, two-storeyed divine mansion, *Mahā-Bhūta Yaksha*. [Fig. 74]. To the list of several cult scenes of the worship (*Maha*) of Yaksha, Nāga, Vaiśravaṇa, Vṛiksha we may add that of Suparṇa

1. *Turiyaṅga bhoyaṇaṅgā vihūsaṇaṅgā bhayaṅga vatthaṅgā ||*
Giha joyi dīviyaṅga bhāyaṇa mallaṅga kappadumā ||
(*Paumachariya* of Vimalasūri 3/3/7 ; also Vasunandi, *Śrāvakāchāra*, śloka 251)

Fig. 67 d

Fig. 67 c

Fig. 67 e

Fig. 67 f

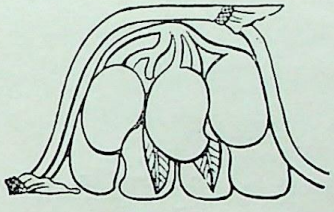


Fig. 68 a

Fig. 67 g

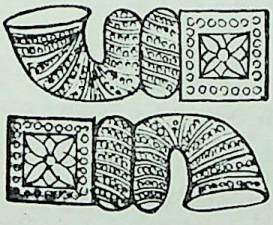
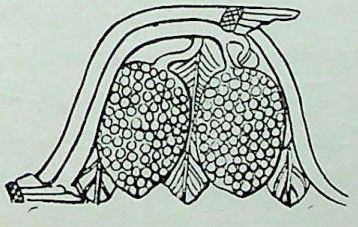
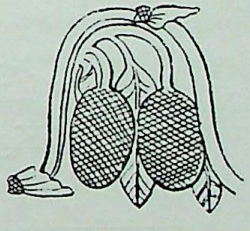


Fig. 69 a

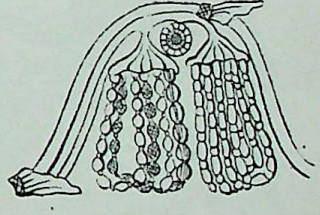


b



c

Fig. 68



ii

Fig. 69 c

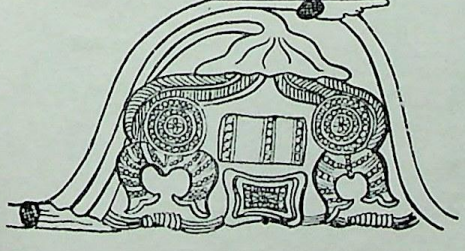


Fig. 69 b

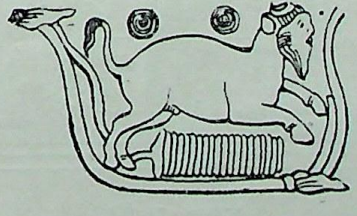


Fig. 69 c i

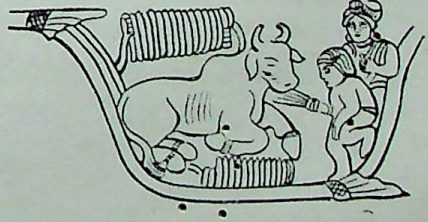
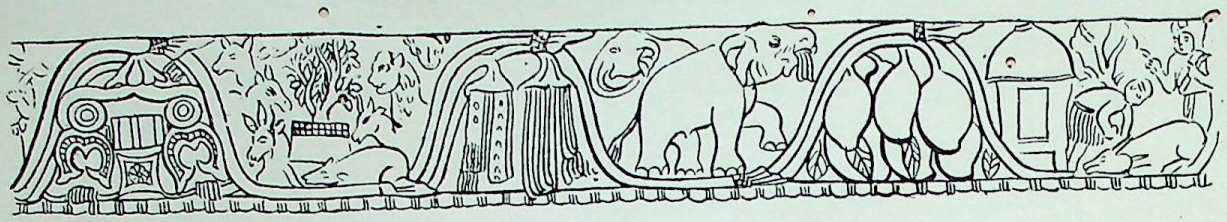


Fig. 69 c iii

PLATE XXVI



Figs. 70-71

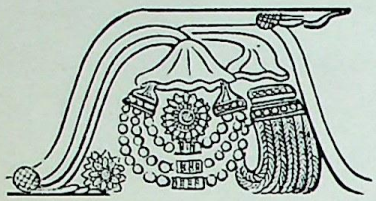


Fig. 72 a

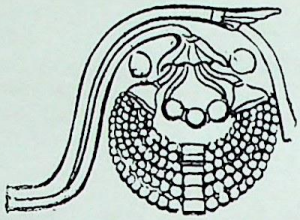


Fig. 72 b

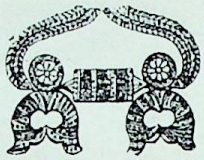


Fig. 72 c-d

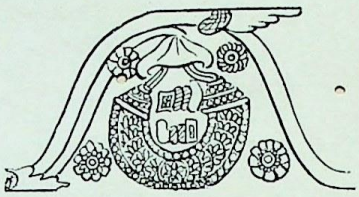


Fig. 72 e

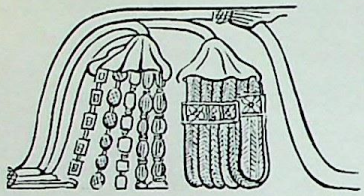


Fig. 72 g-h

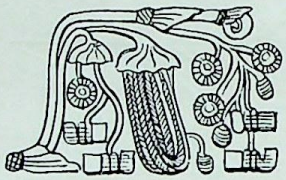


Fig. 72 f

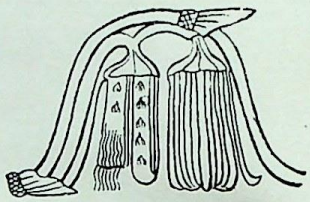


Fig. 72 i

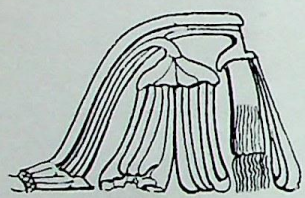


Fig. 72 j

Fig. 73

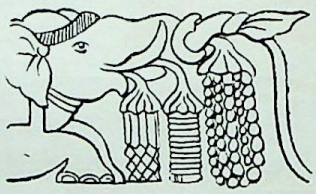


Fig. 73 a

Fig. 74 a

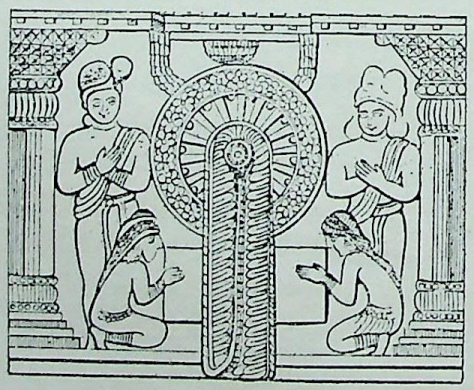


Fig. 74 b

Fig. 74 c

(Pkt. : *Suvaṇṇa*, Hindi : *Sauna*) shown here as Suparṇa Garuḍa on the top of a standard borne by a female horse rider being the earliest representation of Garuḍadhvaja [Fig. 28b] and of Gandharva, Kumbhāṇḍa, Apsaras, Chūḍā, Stambha, etc.

To this may be added a list of the Jātakas and the historical scenes relating to the Buddha's present life. This provides the epic basis of the religious content of the Stūpa. A Stūpa was a dynamic conception profound and living like the *Tripiṭakas* themselves. It existed when the first Stūpa in memory of the Buddha was raised by his kinsmen at Piprahwa or when Buddha himself had ordained that the "body of the Tathāgata" should be treated as they treat the body of a Chakravartin king and that a Stūpa should be erected to the Tathāgata at four cross-roads. The immortal Devas and the mortal men offer universal adoration in *añjali-mudrā* to the Stūpa which was for all practical purposes the person of the Buddha himself.

The Stūpa was both a picture full of aesthetic surfaces (c h i t r a) as rendered by the artists and a narrative (Ā k h y ā n a) which relates to meanings which should be understood both in their literal and symbolical senses. The Stūpa monument was considered both a beautiful (*dassanīyam*) and deeply-moving play (*samvejinīyaṁ thānam*). It was a thing of beauty and the first reaction it produced on the mind of the visitor was that of being beautiful or sight-worthy. It was in every sense delectable to the eye which in our modern terms signified the syle or the aesthetic quality of the craftsman's art; but, important as this element of 'manufacture' is, of greater significance to all the world of Buddhist worshippers and others was the meaning of the Stūpa which was *samvejinīya*, literally, stirring or thrilling of understanding and heart by which the inner soul was fired (*yoniso padahanti*)—those who grasped the flavour of the meaning (*attharasascha labhino*) are few than many others who look to the outword disposition of the shrine. The real spiritual shock consists in the transformation of the soul by an understanding of its deep cosmic meaning. The narrative content of the Stūpa induces in the spectator an interior activity which leads to ecstacy of realisation and *Nirvāṇa*. As we have pointed out earlier the departure of the Mahāpurusha which the Stūpa symbolises was an event not of griéf but of radiating joy which was aggressive and penetrated through all the regions of space. The Bharhut Stūpa is truly a great possession—great for its beauty of sculpture and depth of meaning.

Age of the Stūpa

A natural question arises as to the period when the Bharhut Stūpa was raised. Cunningham assigned it to the period of Aśoka, somewhere between 250 to 200 B. C., the reason being the great similarity between the Brāhmī script of the Bharhut Inscriptions and the script of Aśokan Edicts. There is, no doubt, force in this argument but

what seems to be true is that the original Stūpa of mud and brick belonged to Aśoka's reign and the railings and gateways of stone were added later in the time of the Śuṅgas in the first half of the 2nd century B. C. For this there is some positive evidence on the eastern gateway of the Stūpa in an Inscription which refers to Rājā Dhanabhūti of the Śuṅgas. The Inscription runs as follows :

1. *"Suganaṁ raje rāj̃ño Gāgī-putasa VISA-DEVASA-*
2. *pautena Gotiputasa AGA-RAJASA putena*
3. *Vāchhi-putena DHANA-BHŪTINA kāritaṁ toranaṁ*
4. *Sila-kaṁmata cha upaṁna*

This king Dhanabhūti (circa 150 B.C.) is also said to have built a Stūpa with a *Toraṇa* railing and a *ratnagṛiha* (jewel house) at Mathura. This record of Dhanabhūti was assigned by Cunningham to a period between 180 B. C. to 150 B. C.

SANCHI STŪPAS

Sanchi is only five and a half miles from Vidiśā (modern, Bhelsā) on the confluence of the rivers Vidiśā (modern, Bes) and the Vetravatī (modern, Betwā). It was the capital of Eastern Malwa or the Daśāraṇa country and the most important point on the great highway leading from Mathura to Pratishṭhāna on the Godavari. Like other great Buddhist centres springing up on the outskrits of important cities, the *Saṅghārāma* of Sanchi grew up on the outskrits of Vidiśā with magnificent monuments—Stūpas, temples, monasteries and memorial pillars. The world famed monuments of Sanchi are the most precious and perfect of all that Buddhism has bequeathed to posterity. The monuments flourished for twelve hundred years beginning from the reign of Aśoka. According to the Mahāvaṁsa when Aśoka was appointed governor of Ujjayinī he halted for some time at Vidiśā and married Devī, daughter of a rich merchant, who became the mother of Mahendra and Saṅgamitrā. Here was a hill named Mahā-Chetiya-giri which seems to have derived its name from the great Stūpa built on it. The hill is less than three hundred feet in height and of whale-back shape. There is a group of about sixty Stūpas known as Bhilsa Topes as follows :

At Sonari there are eight Stūpas ; at Satadhārā five ; at Andher three ; at Bhojpur thirty-seven and at Sanchi about seven.

The most important ones are the Stūpas I, II and III at Sanchi where relics of Moggalāyana and Sāriputta are preserved in Stūpa No. III. Stūpas I and III are on the main terrace and Stūpa II on the western side of the hill. There are also ancient foundations of two apsidal temples, Temple 18 near the main Stūpa to the south of it

and Temple 40 with the foundations of an apsidal hall or *Maṇḍapa* at a distance in the southern area. There are five principal monasteries but built in the Gupta and medieval periods.

Stūpa I, the Mahā-Chetiya has four Gateways with the Aśokan pillar in front of the South Gateway. Stūpa II has no Gateway. Stūpa III has one Gateway.

The building activity at Sanchi began during the time of Aśoka who raised a brick-built Stūpa. The five gateways and the railings were added during the early Āndhra period about the second half of the first century B. C. There is an inscription on the south gateway top architrave facing the Stūpa, stating it to be the gift of Ānanda, foreman of the artisans (*āveśin*) of King Sirī Sātakarṇi, ruler of the Andhra dynasty (Inscription No. 398, Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, 1.342). During the reign of the Kushāṇa kings little of importance was added excepting a statue of the Buddha in red sandstone during the time of Vāsishka. In the Gupta period Sanchi once more emerged into importance, as shown by an inscription on its railing referring to the gift of a village for the Ārya Saṅgha, that is the community of the Buddhist monks residing at Kākanādaboṭa, the new name of the ancient Mahā-Chetiyagiri.[1]

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1. The monuments at Sanchi may be classified as follows according to their chronolgy :

(i) *Aśokan Period (274-232 B. C.)*

(a) Brick-built core of the Great Stūpa (i. e. Stūpa No. 1) 250 B. C. (16′ x 10′ x 3′).
(b) The stone umbrella or the *harmikā* of polished Chunār sandstone.
(c) Monolithic lion-pillar, near the south gateway (*toraṇa*) of the Great Stūpa.
(d) Foundations of the apsidal hall (building No 40).

(ii) *Śuṅga Period (185 B. C. -70 B. C.).*

(a) Enlargement of the Great Stūpa (No. I)
(b) Stone covering (*śilāchchhādana*) to twice its original size.
(c) Larger *chhatra*, *harmikā* and stone shaft.
(d) Ground railing.
(e) The upper terrace, 14′ high from the ground and 6′ in width to serve as an upper procession path.
(f) Stone pavement covering the hill top.
(g) Stūpa II—ground railing (four balustrades on ground), berm, stairway, *harmikā*, relic caskets.
(h) Stūpa III—Body and balustrades of the stairway, berm, *harmikā*, relic bones.
(i) Temple 18—Lowest floor, pillared *maṇḍapa* on the ruins of the apsidal hall.

(iii) *Āndhra Period (220 B. C.—150 A. D.).*

(a) Great Stūpa (No. 1), four gateways (25 B.C.) and extensions of the ground balustrade.
(b) Stūpa III—Ground balustrade and single gateway.
(c) Temple 18—Third floor counting from the top.

(iv) *Gupta Period (4th-5th century A. D.).*

Stūpa I. Four shrines in processional path.
Temple 18. Second floor.
Temple 31. Plinth and pedestal beneath lotus throne of image ; two pillars. Nāgī statue.
Monasteries 36, 46 and 47.

(Continued)

THE GREAT STŪPA : The original brick Stūpa built by Aśoka was retained in tact and encased later by a large stone envelope (*śilā-āchchhādana*) during the Śuṅga period. The new structure was about twice the original Mauryan Stūpa covering an area 120′ in diameter, with a total height of 54′ which is the height at present. Around the original Stūpa was at first added a rubble of stone and bricks until the whole was provided with a casing of roughly dressed stones (*śileshṭakā*) laid in even courses but without any binding cement. This offers the first instance of true stone masonry used for constructional purposes in any old Indian building. The stone facing was finished with a coat of concrete 4″ thick having a fine plaster over it which is still preserved in many places. Possibly the plastered surface was finished with colours and gilding.

The Mahā-Chetiya or the Great Stūpa No. I, is a hemi-spherical dome truncated at the top. It is surrounded at its 16′ height by a lofty terrace (*medhi*) which served as the upper *pradakshiṇāpatha* girdled by a smaller railing. This high terrace was approached by a double flight of steps (*sopāna*) built on its south side. The lofty plinth around the base of the enlarged dome has an average height of 15′6″ with an average projection of 5′ 9″. Each *Sopāna* contains 25 steps with treads about 17″ broad and with risers about 7″ in height.

On the ground level there is a second processional path which is paved with stone and encircles the Stūpa. Round this is the Great Railing, a circular structure of plain solid design marked by largeness of proportions and austerity of treatment. It is 11′ high and in the grandeur of its construction bears resemblance with the Stone-Henge of England. The upright pillars (*sthambha*), rail bars (*sūchī*) and coping stones (*ushṇīsha*) are all unrelieved by carving of any kind, and in this respect they are quite unlike the *vedikā* at Bharhut which is profusely sculptured. Each of the upright pillars is 9′ high from the ground and placed at an interval of 2′ between each. Connecting these upright posts are three cross-bars, each 2′ wide and separated only by a narrow space of 3¼″ ; on the top of the pillars was placed an immense coping stone round on the upper side (*maṇḍala-ushṇīsha*) which reproduces the method of construction employed in wooden originals, especially the joints of the railings and the tenons of the

(v) *Medieval Period (7th-9th centuries A. D.).*

(i) Facing of Stūpa 6.

(ii) Temple 18. Stone pillars and walls ; terracotta tablets.

(iii) Temple 31. Reconstructed walls, pillars, lotus throne and image.

(iv) Building 40. Shrine and portion on east side of *maṇḍapa*, plinth.

(v) Temple 45. Monasteries 45 and 47—Additions in upper stratum.

(vi) *Late Medieval Period (10th-11th centuries A. D.).*

Some additions were made to temple 18 and monasteries 40 and 47. In temple 45 existing shrine and statue in the *Garbhagriha* and some other accessory addition.

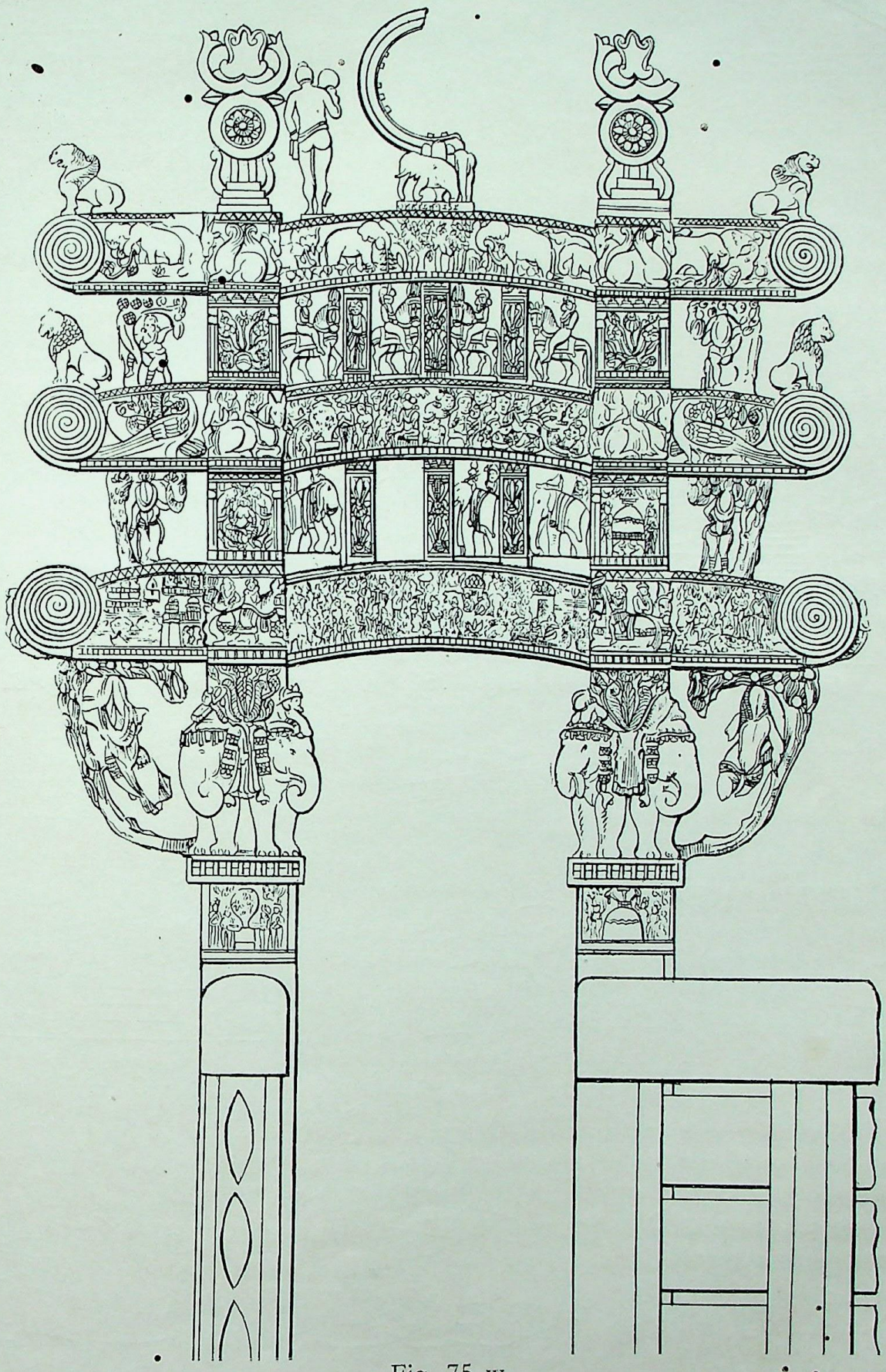


Fig. 75 w

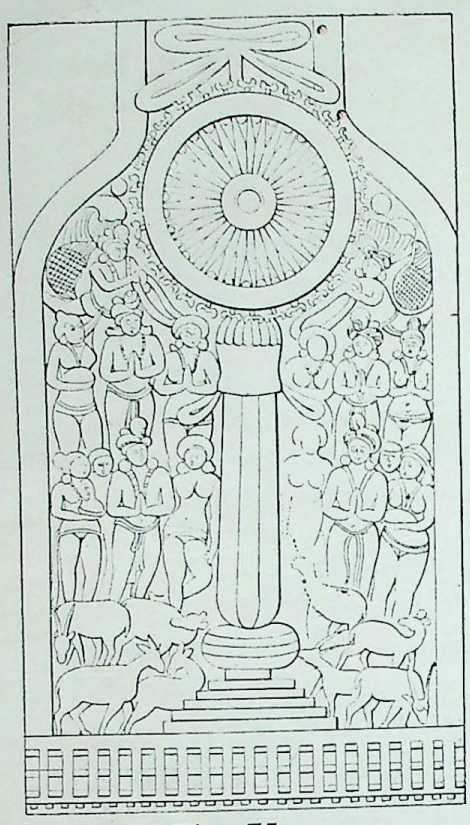


Fig. 75 x

Fig. 75

Fig. 76

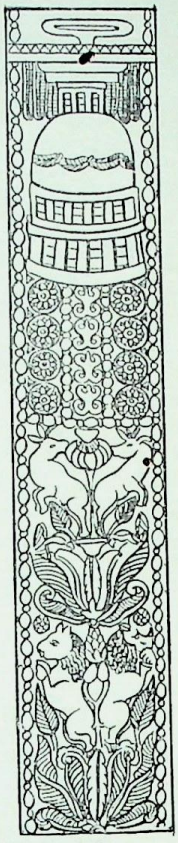
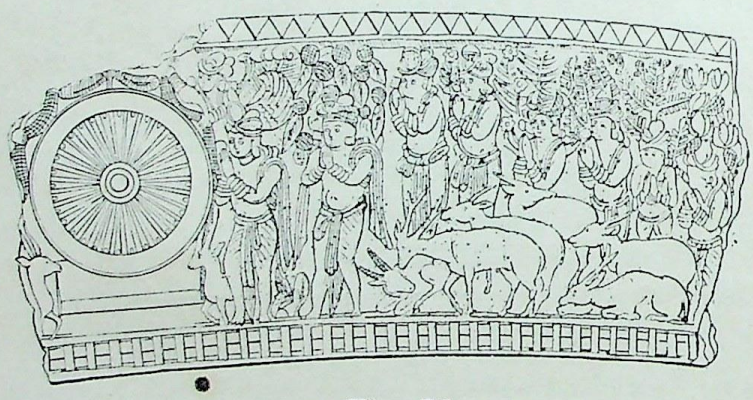


Fig. 81



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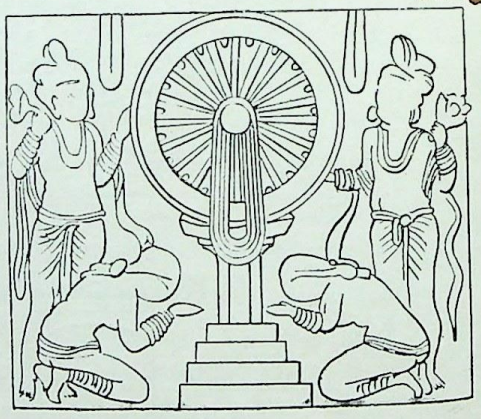

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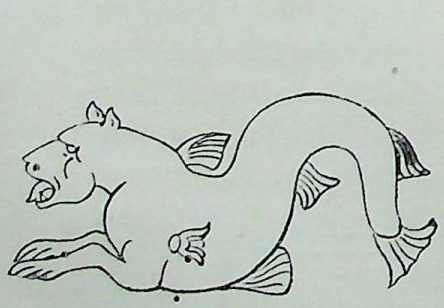

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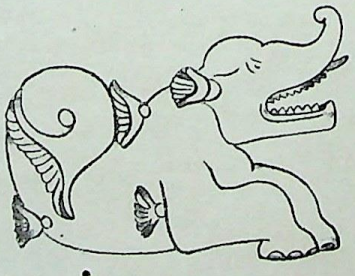
ii



iii

Fig. 75 z

uprights were more appropriate to the work of carpenters. The triple cross-bars and the lenticular sections into which they were inserted were obviously derived from the bamboo and wooden rails of the village enclosures. [Fig. 55].

A very impressive phenomenon is the association of the whole community of lay worshippers in the construction of the railing and the gateways as shown by the small donative inscriptions engraved on them. Dr. Bühler published a collection of 378 inscriptions from this balustrade of Stūpa I and 78 from Stūpa II whereas N. G. Majumdar has given a total of 827 dedicatory epigraphs from Stūpas I, II and III. An important inscription on the east gateway of Stūpa I dated Gupta era 93 (=412-413 A.D.) records the conquest of Eastern Malwa by Chandragupta II.

GATEWAYS: The crowning glory of the Great Stūpa are its richly carved gateways. The first to be put up was the south gateway followed by the northern gateway which is the best preserved and retains most of its original features and ornamental figures as they may have appeared on the day of their first construction. The eastern and the western *toraṇas* were added later in succession. All of them were of similar design and 34′ in height. Each gateway was composed of two square pillars surmounted by capitals, which in turn supported a superstructure of three architraves with voluted ends decorated beautifully by spirals. The architraves were separated from one another by four square blocks set in pairs above the capitals of the square pillars. Between each pair of square blocks were three short uprights, the open spaces between them being occupied by figures of horse-and elephant-riders to be seen from both sides The capitals are adorned with standing dwarfs or elephants or with the fore-fronts of lions set back to back. The most pleasing feature of these gateways are the female figures or caryatids standing under the dense foliage of trees and occupying the outer spaces between the lowermost architrave and the spring of the capital. In this festoon posture they are known as *toraṇa-śāla-bhañjikā* in Sanskrit literature, and it is usual for modern writers to designate them as Vṛikshakās or Yakshīs. Similar female figures of smaller proportions stand on the architraves immediately above them with lions or elephants placed on the volute on the two sides. The open spaces between the architraves, as said above, are occupied by figures of horsemen or elephants and their riders and lions winged or otherwise; a feature of the horses and riders being that they are carved on both sides so as to look on both directions. One of the small Yakshīs is also carved on the two sides, so as to look Janus-like both on the front and the back side. On the top of the highest architrave were placed the special emblems of Buddhism, viz. Dharmachakra in the centre flanked by chawri-bearing Yakshas and Triratnas on the two sides. The scenes depicted on the gateways in bas relief follow in general the religious contents of the Bharhut Stūpa and are

elaborate compositions illustrative of the many cults that were prevalent amongst the people. There are numerous representations of the sacred trees, Stūpas, scenes from Buddha's life and Jātaka stories. [Fig. 56].

HARMIKĀ RAILING: After the completion of the brick Stūpa in Aśoka's time the first adjunct to be added to it was the *harmikā*, i. e. the platform and railing on the summit with the crowning umbrella and post fixed in the centre. This contingent of the *harmikā* with its proper architectural form was found in the case of all the three principal Stūpas. The shaft of the *chhatra* was supported by a pedestal which took the form of a heavy stone box (*Dhātugarbha-mañjūshā* or relic coffer) with a lid measuring 5′7″ in diameter and 1′8″ in height in which the relics were once preserved. Over seventy pieces of the *harmikā* railings were found by Marshall with which he restored the original from of the railing. The stone of which it was made was the fine, grey-white sandstone of Nagouri which was chistle-dressed and fitted with more than usual accuracy. The *harmikā* railings on the summit of the Stūpa was square measuring 21′6″ on each side with a diagonal of 30′1″. It consisted of upright posts, cross-bars and copings as usual with other railings and each upright post spaced at even intervals was 9′11″ in height including 2′6″ of hammer-dressed base embedded in the masonry of Stūpa top. The diameter of the flat top of the Stūpa is only about 38′.

CROWNING UMBRELLA: In the centre of the *harmikā* stood a *chhatra* of which several pieces were found in the debris. They are relieved by most delicately defined ribs radiating on their undersides; the workmanship displaying all that exquisite precision which characterises every known specimen of the mason's craft in the Mauryan age, and which has probably never been surpassed in the stone carving of any country. (Marshall).

SCULPTURES

These may be divided into two classes, firstly scenes which are of elaborate composition and differ considerably on the four gateways, secondly simple decorative devices or symbolical objects and figures repeated many times; the latter fall into four categories: 1 Four great events in the life of the Buddha, 2 Figures of Yakshas, 3 Figures of animals or birds, 4 Floral designs.

The reliefs relating to Buddha's life show his birth (*Jāti*), enlightenment (*Sambodhi*), first sermon (*Dharma-Chakra-pravartana*) and death (*Mahāparinirvāṇa*). The representation of the Buddha's birth takes the form of a lotus or a bunch of lotuses coming out of a *Pūrṇaghaṭa*; in others the figure of Māyā is seen seated on a full blown lotus; in others Māyādevī is shown standing ready for birth. Foucher identifies the figure of Śrī-Lakshmī bathed by the two *Nāgas* (here in the form of two

elephants) with Māyādevī. The *Sambodhi* is represented by a throne under a *Pīpal* tree or by the tree alone, with worshippers bringing offerings in some scenes, or in more elaborate reliefs with Māra and his hosts of demons. The turning of the Whel-of-the-Law in the Deer Park of Vārāṇasī is shown by the symbol of the Wheel sometimes placed on a throne or on the top of a pillar, the *Mṛigadāva* being shown by the presence of two deer. The symbol of *Mahāparinirvāṇa* is a Stūpa attended by worshippers. The Stūpas as well as trees are shown as emblems of the seven previous Buddhas in Sanchi art also as at Bharhut.

We have seen at Bharhut the fourfold scheme of the *Chāturmahārājika* gods carved in the gateways. They were rulers of the four quarters, and are depicted in high relief at Sanchi also. Smaller figures of Yakshas are shown on the narrow uprights between the architraves.

Figures of animals or birds are as a rule arranged schematically in pairs (*Saṅghāṭa*). The most conspicuous positions for the animals are the faces of the "false capitals" separating the architraves. The animals are both real and legendary, sometimes with riders and sometimes without them. They include goats, horses, bulls, camels, elephants, lions and leogriffs. On the east gateway (lowest architrave inner face, north end) the riders come from a cold climate as shown by their wearing the northern dress (*udīchya veśa*). Winged lions (*Sapaksha Siṁha*) and leogriff (*Siṅghavyāla*) formed part of wide canvas of motifs common to India and Western Asia. The floral designs have a unique richness and exuberance which are among the greatest beauties of this monument. According to Marshall motifs taken from the plant world have at all times been handled with exquisite taste by the Indian artists, but never more exquisitely than by the sculptors of Sanchi with the exception of the honeysuckle pattern on the south gateway and the grapevine on the west gateway. Most of the plant designs are purely Indian in character and based, as they are, on the most careful and faithful observation of nature *par excellence* anything of which Assyrian or Persian art was capable. Lotus representing the birth of the individual and the cosmos which was the commonly accepted symbol of fertility, abundance and blooming life, is a most favourite among all floral subjects. Some of the best examples are to be seeen on the outer sides of the pillars of the gateways. Sometimes the lotus takes form of *kalpalatā*, the like of which we have seen at Bharhut. At others the lotus is treated as a repeat motif and worked into the form of the Tree of Life (*Śrī-vṛiksha*), made much more gorgeous by pairs of riders on lions or leogriffs as carved on the right pillar of the West Gateway. The grapevine border and the horned leonine figures point to Western Asiatic intimations in the making of this form of the Tree of Life which seems to have been adapted to accord with the Indian conception of *Śrī-vṛiksha*. The footprints of

the Buddha and the *Triratna* emblem find a natural place in the reliefs on the pillars as parts of Buddhist symbolical iconography.

South Gateway

This was the earliest gateway to be added to the great Stūpa. It was restored in 1882 ; as it stands it has three architraves. The top one shows the figure of *Śrī-Lakshmī* standing in the midst of a lotus grove (*Padmavanā*) and attended by two elephants which form a very charming representation of the scene. Foucher would take it as Māyādevī but it was more properly the cult *Śrī-Lakshmī* (or *Sirimā Devatā* as seen at Bharhut). On the middle architrave is depicted the visit of the emperor Aśoka riding in a chariot and followed by elephant riders to the Stūpa at Rāmagrāma which was defended by Nāga guardians. Above the Stūpa are Suparṇas holding garlands. On the lowest architrave the dwarfish pot-bellied figures of squatting and sprawling *Kumbhāṇḍas* are holding pearl necklaces in their hands and spouting forth the lotus creeper of Life and Fortune from their mouth. This was a very significant motif of early Indian art relating to the cult of Kumbhāṇḍa gods whose chief was Virūḍhaka, the Lokapāla of the southern direction. It should be noted that the circular ends of the architraves on the two sides were occupied by a design of seven zones (*chakravyūha*) now termed as "spiral". The two cubicals separating the architraves on left show the Bodhi Tree and Stūpa and the Bodhi Tree and Śrī-Lakshmī on right. The false capitals or the corresponding portions of the architraves themselves, both on the right and left show pairs of couchant animals with riders, e. g. horses (*haya-saṅghāṭa*), stags (*mṛiga-saṅghāṭa*). This was a decorative motif seen also on the pillars in the Western Indian caves and elsewhere at Bharhut, Mathura, etc. and occurs in the literary descriptions of the Jainas.

Backside : Top Architrave—In the central section are three Stūpas alternating with four trees with thrones in front of them worshipped by human and divine figures. These represent the six previous Mānushī Buddhas and Gautama Buddha—three symbolised by their Stūpas and four by their Bodhi Trees. The Śirīsha Tree belongs to Krakuchchhanda, the Udumbara to Kanakamuni, the Nyagrodha to Kāśyapa and the Pippala to Śākyamuni.

On the dome of the central Stūpa is the inscription, already mentioned, referring to Ānanda, the royal architect of King Śrī Sātakarṇi.

Middle Architrave—The story of Chhaddanta Jātaka showing the Bodhisattva born as the king of a herd of elephants besporting himself in the lotus lake and walking to the central Banyan tree, while the hunter Soṇuttara hidden among the rocks makes ready his bow.

LOWEST ARCHITRAVE—It depicts the war of the relics which the chiefs of seven other clans waged against the Mallas of Kuśīnārā for the possession of the Buddha's *Dhātus*. In the centre of the architrave is shown the seize of Kuśīnārā. To right and left the victorious chiefs are departing in chariots and on elephants. After the war, Stūpas were erected for Buddha's relics at Rājagṛiha, Vaiśālī, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Rāmagrāma, Veṭhadipa, Pāvā and Kuśinārā.

The ends of the three berms are occupied by the *Chakravyūha* motif, the dies on the east and west ends by Pūrṇakumbha, Bodhi Tree worship of the three Buddhas, and the false capitals. The gateway is supported on two square pillars which are also profusely sculptured with several panels on their front, inner and back faces, e. g. the left pillar of the South Gateway shows on its front face three panels, the top one showing the worship of the Dharmachakra supported on a stepped base. The wheel has thirty-two spokes terminating in thirty-two Triratna symbols on its outer rim. The Dharmachakra is topped by a parasol and garlands and the octagonal shaft of the pillar is rooted in a Full Vase. The crowded company of worshippers and the herd of deer on the two sides makes it one of the most vivid pictures of the Buddha's Dharmachakra.

FRONT FACE : Second Panel—Emperor Aśoka in his chariot with his retinue round him.

INNER FACE : Top and second panels—Aśoka with his two queens at the *Bodhivṛiksha-prākāra* at Bodhgaya. This was the temple built by Aśoka himself around the sacred *Pīpal* Tree. Aśoka has fainted at the sight of the withering tree.

INNER FACE : Lower Panel—The worship of the Bodhisattva's hair and head-dress, same as the *Chūḍāmaha* in a Bharhut relief. A company of deities in the *trayastriṁśa* heaven is worshipping the hair of the Bodhisattva. On the corresponding panel on the front face of this pillar the deities on foot, on horse back and on elephant are hastening to do homage to the Buddha's lock. The figure on elephant is Indra with his queen.

LEFT PILLER : On the west face of this pillar there is a very interesting scene of which the true significance has not been understood up to now. In a meandering lotus creeper are three scenes of the Uttarakuru country showing three *mithuna* figures with ornaments and clothes being produced from the branches of the mythical *Kalpa-vṛikshas*. Such *Mithuna* figures became a favourite motif of early Indian art being represented particularly at Bhājā in the so-called Indra panel which is actually the scene of King Māndhātā's visit to the Uttarakuru country. Here at Sanchi in the lowest wave we see the *mithuna* or male and female couple seated in forest with

flowers, fruits, birds and lions. The female figure has a pair of anklets near her feet and holds in her hands a necklace of amulets or auspicious signs (*maṅgalaka mālā*) the use of which was considered effective to ward off evil and which was taken as a distinctive mark of the idyllic land of Uttarakuru. It may be seen that such a necklace is worn by the female figure in the couple carved in the next wave. Two such amulet strings (*maṅgalaka mālā*) are illustrated on the east pillar of the northern gateway. The couple in the lowest panel is playing on a harp and this is also seen in the Bhājā scene where seated under a Kalpavṛiksha tree they are witnessing the dance of a female figure. This became in Śuṅga art also a subject for detached terracotta plaques the meaning of which was well-understood as a version of life in the Uttarakuru land, such specimens having been found at Mathura, Rajghat and Patna.

RIGHT PILLAR : Top Panel—It depicts the episode of the Buddha in the form of a Boddi Tree and the Nāgarāja Muchalinda, surrounded by four Nāgī queens with one hood only. In the middle panel are four *Lokapālas* with four attendants offering the begging bowls to the invisible Buddha. The bottom panel shows the merchant Prapusha and Bhallika passing through Uruvilva seated in their chariot.

INNER-FACE : Top Panel shows the Bodhi Tree of Buddha Vipassin with a woman prostrating before the Throne.

Middle Panel shows the grass-cutter holding a sickle who presented a sheaf of straw for spreading on the Buddha's throne.

The Fourth Panel shows the Sambodhi Throne with male and female worshippers, the latter with ewers of water. Bottom Panel shows the *Chaṅkrama* or Promenade of the Buddha.

The capitals on the pillars of the southern gateway consist of pairs of lions (*Siṅgha saṅghāṭa*) seated back to back, two on the front side and two on the back, on the northern and eastern gateways, of similar pairs of elephants (*Gaja saṅghāṭa*) and on the western gateway, of standing Atlantes or *Kīchaka* figures.

NORTHERN GATEWAY

This is the best preserved of all the four gateways which preserved the largest portion of its ornamental figures. Above the topmost beam were seven figures, a Dharmachakra in the centre and on both sides of it an attendant Yaksha, a *triratna* and a winged lion. On the edges of the main pillars are sinuous creepers including the vine.

Front face of the top architrave shows Seven Mānushī Buddhas represented by their Bodhi Trees and Stūpas alternately as on the other three gateways. Middle Architrave—repetition of the Seven Bodhi Trees of the seven Mānushī Buddhas.

Between the top and middle architraves there are three uprights and four detached figures of horse riders carved on two faces. The horse riders on their breasts are wearing the *Śrīvatsa* symbol which as an auspicious amulet is included in both the necklaces specially shown on this gateway. On the central upright is shown a wheel-topped pillar inside a railing where two parasols are planted.

Lowermost architrave : On this lintel one of Sanchi's masterpieces is carved, showing the Buddha in his last but one incarnation born as Prince Vessantara who realised the Perfection of Charity (*Dāna Pāramitā*). Here the story is told with a great wealth of detail and has the unique distinction of covering the entire architrave, both front and back. Here we see three panels, prince Vessantara giving away his royal elephant ; his banishment and saying farewell to his parents outside the city ; driving away in his chariot with his family and presently parting with his chariot and horses through some Brāhmaṇas. From the point of view of carving this is one of the most vivid representations at Sanchi marked by the greatest clarity of treatment of city architecture, personal ornaments and dress as well as of the quadriga and the horses. On the soffit or underside of this architrave is a row of beautifully carved lotuses showing in the centre a red lotus (*padma*) framed between blue lotuses (*nīlotpala*). On the two die portions of these three architraves there are two Gaja-Lakshmī representations in which the goddess and the elephant are all shown seated and standing on full blown lotuses. This had become an established style for a number of other statuettes of the goddess seen in Mathura art. Between the three architraves on the two sides of the Gaja-Lakshmī figures are to be seen standing Vṛikshakas under distended boughs of mango or Aśoka trees which set the norm for such figures in later art. But the most beautiful and delicate are the toraṇa caryatids festooning the corners on the outside which are also seen in their best preserved form in a similar position on the eastern gateway.

Other scenes depicted on the backside of the top and middle architraves show Chhaddanta Jātaka, the elephant king paying homage to the Bodhi Tree ; and the demon hosts of Māra army at the time of Buddha's temptation (middle) ; the bottom lintel continuing the Vessantara Jātaka showing life in the hermitage, gift of the children, gift of the wife and the final reunion.

Left Pillar (front view) depicts the great miracle (*Mahā-prātihārya*) of the Mango Tree performed by the Buddha at Śrāvastī when he walked in the air, and flames broke out from his feet and water from his head.

The second panel depicts the Jetavana showing three *Gandhakuṭīs* of Buddha with the throne in front of it. In the foreground are punchmarked coins spread as in a relief at Bharhut. In the third panel another miracle of Śrāvastī is shown in which the Buddha is soaring in the air over his *Chaṅkrama*. Panel four shows king Prasenajit going out of the city-gate of Śrāvastī to meet the Buddha in the Jetavana. Panel five is an inset of the Uttarakuru country where *dampatī* figures drinking wine and playing music are shown with the figure of Māndhātā on elephant carved below them.

Inner Face—Visit of Indra to the Buddha in the Indraśaila cave. In the upper part of the panel is an artificial cave resembling in its façade many Buddhist shrines hewn in the rocks of western and central India. In front of the door is the throne which marks the presence of the Buddha. The animals, including human-faced rams, peering out from among the rocks serve to indicate the wildnesss of the spot. Below is the company of Indra in attitudes of worship; Indra himself being probably represented twice, first as the principal figure in the foreground and then with his back to the spectator, against the rocks.

Second panel shows a king with his cortege issuing from a city ; probably king Ajātaśatru coming out of Rājagṛiha on a visit to the Āmravana of Jīvaka. Panel three shows the Veṇuvana at Rājagṛiha with the throne of the Buddha in the centre and devotees around.

Outer Side : This depicts one of the most interesting motifs in the whole range of Sanchi art, showing a golden post (*suvarṇa yashṭhi*) with eight parts of pegs (*nāgadanta*) for hanging golden necklace (*hemamālā*). In the treasure-houses of royal palaces and rich men's houses such golden pillars for the storage of costly necklaces were used as visible symbols of goddess Śrī-Lakshmī since their earliest reference occurs in the apocryphal Śrī-Sūkta of the Ṛigveda where the goddess Śrī is described as *yashṭiṁ suvarṇāṁ hemamālinīṁ Sūryaṁ hiraṇmayīṁ Lakshmīm* (hymn 14), i. e. golden Lakshmī resplendent as the Sun, takes the form of a golden pillar loaded with golden necklaces. It appears that in the second stage the idea was connected with the symbolism of the Uttarakuru country and such a post was taken to represent a cross-section of the wealth of the Uttarakuru land in which string of golden amulet especially formed part. In a previous illustration on the southern gateway we have seen that the female figures wear such amulet strings. Here two of these strings or necklaces are shown. The left one having eleven and the right one thirteen auspicious amulet beads as follows :

Left : 1 sun, 2 wheel, 3 lotus pond (*padmasara*), 4 goad (*aṅkuśa*), 5 Indra's triangle-headed banner (Vaijayantī), 6 lotus (*paṅkaja*), 7 a pair of fish (*mīna-mithuna*), 8 Śrīvatsa, 9 battle axe (*paraśu*), 10 mirror (*darpaṇa*), 11 lotus (*kamala*).

RIGHT : 1 lotus, 2 goad, 3 Kalpavṛiksha, 4 mirror, 5 Śrīvatsa, 6 *Vaijayantī*, 7 *Paṅkaja*, 8 *mīna-yugala*, 9 battle axe, 10 flower garland (*pushpadāma*), 11-12-13 wheel, two other symbols.

A possession of these divine necklaces was considered apotropaic and seems to have formed part of a cult of goddess Śrī-Lakshmī, later on linked to the Uttarakuru conception. In the third stage it became associated with the physical statue of the Buddha showing him in a visible form like other symbols and therefore labelled as *Bhagavato Pamāṇa-Laṭṭhi* 'Height-measuring Staff of the Blessed One'. (Marshall, II, pl. XXVII). Even one of these amulets was considered sacred and efficacious enough to ward off evil. Individual specimens have been found in early Indian art, as amongst relics of the Stūpa. In the next stage the number of auspicious signs became fixed at eight as on the *Āyāga paṭṭas* in Mathura (J 249 of Lucknow Museum) and this gave rise to a new name '*Ashṭha-maṅgalaka-mālā*' which included the following list :

The Mīna-Mithuna, Deva Vimāna-gṛiha, Śrīvatsa, Vardhamāna, Triratna, Pushpadāma, Indra-Yashṭi or Vaijayantī and Pūrṇaghaṭa. The names had become popular as we find by its mention twice in the Aṅgavijjā of about the second-third century. During the Gupta period its possession was ardently desired by travellors both on land and sea and rich men. The number eight had become stereotyped since Bāṇa compares the eighteen islands encircling Bhāratavarsha to an *Aśhṭamaṅgalaka Māla* (*ashṭādaśadvīpāshṭhamaṅgalakamālinī medinī*, Harshacharita, ch. 6, p. 185).

RIGHT PILLAR—Front face shows the descent of the Buddha from the heaven of the thirty-three gods; in the centre is the ladder with figures of Indra and Brahmā. Second panel shows the riderless horse depicting the Buddha's departure from the palace (*Abhinishkramaṇa*). Third panel—The conversion of the Śākyas and miracle at Kapilavastu.

INNER FACE—Top panel shows probably the dedication of the Stūpa containing the Buddha's relics by the Mallas. Second panel—The offering of a bowl of honey to the Blessed One by a monkey.

Third panel back—Tree and throne of the Buddha with attendant worshippers bringing offerings.

It may be noted that the various life scenes like the descent from heaven, presentation of the honey cup, etc., set up a model of portrayal followed subsequently in the schools of Mathura and Gandhāra.

EASTERN GATEWAY

Like the northern gateway, the eastern has been preserved in its original position although much damaged. The motifs on the capitals and false capitals are

about the same, but are here treated with greater ease and freedom and the style is superior to what is seen in the other gateways.

Top Architrave: Front—Seven Mānushī Buddhas shown by their Stūpas and Bodhi Trees as on other gateways.

Middle Architrave—Buddha's departure from Kapilavastu, the city being shown with walls and a moat and gateway. This relief is repeated four times to show the progress of the prince.

Third architrave shows the visit of Aśoka to the Bodhi tree. In the centre, the temple and trees of Bodhgaya; to the left, a crowd of musicians and devotees with water vessels; to the right, a royal retinue and a king and queen descending from an elephant and afterwards doing worship at the Tree. This is the ceremonial visit which Aśoka and his queen Tissarakkhitā paid to the Bodhi Tree, for the purpose of watering it and restoring it pristine beauty after the evil spell which the queen in a fit of jealousy had cast upon it. In the pairs of peacocks at the ends of this architrave there may be a special allusion to Aśoka, since the peacock (Pali: *mora*; Sans: *Mayūra*) was the badge of the Mauryan times. On the south voluted ends of the architrave and on the dies and false capitals are scenes of Chakra and Stūpa worship and Gaja-Lakshmī.

Back of the first architrave—Seven Mānushī Buddhas depicted as usual by their thrones and Bodhi Trees.

Middle Architrave—Worship of the Buddha's throne under a Bodhi tree by animal kingdom, including animals, real and mythical, birds and Nāgas.

Lowest Architrave—Worship of the Stūpa by elephants. South end shows *Pūrṇaghaṭa*, Stūpa worship, Bodhi Tree worship and animal capital. North end depicts Stūpa worship and *Pūrṇaghaṭa* motif.

Left Pillar—Front Face: Panels 1 and 2, the illumination and walk of the Buddha. In the second panel from the top is a temple at Bodhgaya built by Aśoka with the throne of Buddha within, and spreading through its upper windows the branches of the sacred tree. It is the illumination of the Buddha, and to right and left of the temple are four figures in an attitude of adoration, probably the guardian kings of the four quarters. Third Panel shows the miracle of the Buddha walking on the waters. The river Nīrañjanā being shown in the foreground.

Lowest Panel shows Bimbisāra with his royal cortege issuing from the city of Rājagriha, on a visit to the Buddha, here symbolised by his empty throne.

INNER FACE—Top Panel depicts the visit of Indra and Brahmā to the Buddha in the city of Uruvilva.

Second Panel shows the victory of the Buddha over the serpents in the Fire Chapel at Uruvilva (*Agniśālā*) in the āshrama of Kāśyapa.

Third Panel—Miracles of the wood, the fire and the offering. In the story of Kāśyapa's conversion it is related that after the miracle of the Fire Temple, a sacrifice was prepared by the Brāhmaṇa but the wood for the fire could not be split, the fire could not be made to burn and the oblation could not be offered, until in each case the Buddha gave his consent.

RIGHT PILLAR—Front Face—The six inferior heavens of the *Kāmāvachara* gods (*Kāmāvachara-deva-lokas*). Starting from below they are as follows :

1. *Chātummahārājikaloka*, heaven of the four *Lokapālas* ;
2. *Trayastriṁśaddeva*, heaven of the thirty-three gods ruled by Indra ;
3. *Yamaloka*, where Yama, God of Death, presides and there is no variation of night and day ;
4. *Tushitasvarga*, where the Bodhisattvas are born prior to their descent on earth and where Maitreya now resides ;
5. *Nirmāṇaratisvarga*, heaven of the gods who rejoice in their own creation ;
6. *Parinirmitavaśavartin* gods, who indulge in pleasures created for them by others and over whom Māra is king.

These *Shadkāmāvachara devās* are six classes of gods still living in the realm of desires in which the passions are still unsubdued. Their representation here is very monotonous. Each of these six heavens is represented by the storeys of a palace, front of which is divided by pillars into three bays, the pillars in the alternate storeys being either plain or provided with elaborate Persepolitan capitals. In the central bay there sits a god, probably Indra, holding a thunder-bolt (*Vajra*) in his right hand and a flask containing nectar in his left. Behind him are his female attendants holding the royal umbrella and fly-whisk. In the bay to his right, seated on a slightly lower seat, is his viceroy ; and to his left are the court musicians and dancers. With slight variations the same figures are repeated in each of the six heavens.

Inner Face—Top Panel showing the gods beseeching the Buddha to be born on earth. Second Panel—Dream of Māyā and the conception of the Bodhisattva. Third Panel—Royal procession of King Śuddhodana going to meet the Buddha. Fourth Panel—Miracle of walking in the air. Bottom Panel—The guardian *Lokapāla* of this

gateway, probably Dhṛitarāshṭra, the king of the Gandharvas, but no distinctive sign is shown.

Back Face—*Sambodhi* or Illumination of the Buddha depicted by the *Pīpal* Tree in square railing with worshippers on either sides and celestial beings above.

Western Gateway

Top Architrave—Repetition of the seven Mānushī Buddhas by their Stūpas and Bodhi Trees.

Middle Architrave—The sermon on the Deer Park. The Dharmachakra is set on a throne and there are numerous deer to indicate the Mṛigadāva in which the sermon was preached.

Lowest Architrave—The Chhaddanta Jātaka (also shown on north and south gateways), shown as King of the elephants worshipping the Bodhi Tree.

On the north end of the architraves are scenes of Gaja-Lakshmī, Stūpa worship and Bodhi Tree worship, and the usual capital of addorsed animals. The capital above the pillar consits of standing *Kumbhāṇḍa* or *Kīchaka* dwarfs with hands raised aloft, a motif which is mentioned in the Sabhāparva as *Kiṅkara, Guhyaka* or *Antarikshachara Rākshasa.*

Back view—The chief of the Mallas of Kuśīnārā bearing the relics of the Buddha on his head into the town of Kuśīnārā.

Middle Architrave—War of the relics, also depicted on the south gateway showing the seven chiefs distinguished by their seven royal umbrellas, advancing with their armies to the city of Kuśīnārā.

Lowest Architrave—Temptation of the Buddha. In the centre is the temple of Bodhgaya with the *Pīpal* Tree and the Throne of the Buddha within ; to the right, the armies of Māra fleeing discomfitted from the Buddha ; to the left, the Devas celebrating the victories of the Buddha over the evil one and exalting his glorious achievements. The *Māra-Dharshaṇa* scene set a model for its subsequent portrayal in other places and even in the Ajanta painting.

The ends of the architraves on the two sides as usual show scenes of Stūpa worship, Chakra worship, winged lions, and false capitals.

Left Pillar : Front Face—The top panel shows a cross-section of the Uttarakuru land with four seated *mithunas* and one standing couple engaged in music and drinking under various *Kalpavṛikshas* producing ornaments.

In the lower panel partly defaced is the repetition of a similar scene with *Kalpavṛikshas* producing ornaments and coins.

INNER FACE : TOP Panel—Śyāma Jātaka. Śyāma, the only son of a blind hermit and his wife, who are entirely dependent on him for support, goes to draw water and is shot with an arrow by the king of Vārāṇasī who is out hunting; thanks to the king's penitence and his parent's sorrow, Indra intervenes, and allows Śyāma to be healed and his parents' sight to be restored.

At the right hand top corner of the panel are the two hermitages with the father and mother seated in front of them. Below them their son Śyāma is coming to draw water from the stream. Then, to the left, we see the figure of the king thrice repeated, first shooting the lad in the water, than with bow in hand, then standing penitent with bow and arrow discarded; and in the left top corner are the father, mother and son restored to health, and by their side the god Indra and the king, the former wearing his characteristic head-dress.

Second Panel—Nāgarāja Muchalinda shielding Buddha from rain.

Third Panel—Only the upper part of this panel is now preserved. It appears to depict the miraculous crossing of the Ganges by the Buddha when he left Rājagṛiha to visit Vaiśālī.

RIGHT PILLAR : Front Face—Top Panel—Mahākapi Jātaka. The Bodhisattva born as the king of monkeys formed a bridge across the river with his own body over which his followers crossed over to eat the fruits of a large mango tree. Brahmadatta surrounded the tree but the Bodhisattva saved his tribe. But Devadatta jumped on his back and made the heart of the Bodhisattva break. Brahmadatta seeing the good deed of the Bodhisattva and repenting of his own attempt to kill him, tended him with great care when he was dying and afterwards gave him royal obsequies.

Higher up the panel is the great mango tree to which two monkeys are clinging, while the king of the monkeys is stretched across the river, from the mango tree to the opposite bank and over his body some monkeys have escaped to the rocks and jungles thereon. In the lower part of the panel, to the left, is king Brahmadatta on horse back with his soldiers.

Higher up the panel the figure of the king is repeated sitting under the mango tree and conversing with the dying Bodhisattva.

SECOND PANEL—*Adhyeshaṇa* i.e. the gods led by Brahmā and Indra entreat the Buddha to show mankind the way of salvation.

THIRD PANEL—Indra's visit to the Buddha in the Indraśaila cave.

LOWEST PANEL—Three rampant lions standing on the lotus tree of life and fortune. The foliage is peculiar to the early school and is never found in later art. We see here a combination of the twisted and corrugated palm leaves in combination with the lotus.

INNER FACE—*Sambodhi* or the enlightenment of the Buddha showing the Throne, Bodhi Maṇḍa under the Bodhi Tree, and round them Māra with his daughters.

SECOND PANEL—The conversion of the Śākyas in which the Buddha preaches in the Banyan Park at Kapilavastu to his father Śuddhodana and the assembled Śākya chiefs.

Back—Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha, represented by a Stūpa and attendant figures.

The sculptures on these four gateways with their architraves and pillars are sometimes bold being conceived independently and at others crowded in multitudinous groups as for example those in the war of relics. In other cases as in the depiction of the Vessantara Jātaka the scenes are synoptically treated and of clear composition.

There is an abundance of natural scenes showing Bodhi trees and domestic and wild animals like elephants, lions and deer. There are certain marked points of contrast between Bharhut and Sanchi portrayals. At Bharhut the number of Jātaka scenes are much more in excess than at Sanchi; whereas the Bharhut sculptors took pleasure in depicting a number of minor Jātakas, the Sanchi artisans only concentrate on the great Jātakas and those also limited in number—for example, Vessantara Jātaka, Chhaddanta Jātaka (repeated several times), Śyāma Jātaka and Mahākapi Jātaka. The number of Buddha's life-scenes is much in excess at Sanchi and even there the sculptors are more fond of depicting the miracles of the Master, e. g. his walking in the air, on water and the miracles in the hermitage of Kāśyapa. The historical scenes also may be said to be more frequent at Sanchi; for example, we find the visit of Ajātaśatru and Prasenajit Kosala to the Buddha and of Prasenajit visiting the mango tree at Śrāvastī, Ajātaśatru visiting the Āmravana of Jīvāka, king Śuddhodana going to meet the Buddha, and Aśoka's visit to the Bodhivṛiksha at Bodhgaya and the Nāga Stūpa at Rāmagrāma. The life episodes of the Buddha had become very much standardised at Sanchi, being frequently portrayed in the form of the worship of the Bodhi Tree, Dharmachakra and Stūpa.

A new feature at Sanchi is the especial emphasis on depicting scenes of the Uttarakuru country where happy *mithunas* enjoy dance, music and drink under the Kalpavṛiksha trees. It appears that the Uttarakuru had been accepted as the land of Buddhist paradise, although still retaining its *Maha* character. The *toraṇas* at

Bharhut are finished in crocodile-shaped volutes and those at Sanchi in the 'spiral' motifs (*Chakravyūha*) which was a marked difference between the two Stūpas. The *Saṅghāṭa* of the addorsed animals like the horses, elephants, deer, bulls and lions is much more emphasised at Sanchi. The Śrī-Lakshmī depiction on the false capitals and also that of *Pūrṇakumbha* is a conspicuous feature on the Sanchi *toraṇas*. It appears that the spirit behind the Śrī-Lakshmī cult was still alive, but more evolved at Sanchi and became assimilative of the religious beliefs about Uttarakuru on the one hand and about the nativity of the Buddha on the other ; but still we should recognise its popular character as part of a folk cult. [Fig. 65].

Marshall noticed the diversity of style and inequality in technique amongst the sculptors at Sanchi. The second panel on the front face of the right pillar of western gateway, the *Adhyeshaṇa* scene shows a strong archaising tendency whereas the *Chūḷāmaha* scene on the lowest panel of the front face of the left pillar of the south gateway shows as advanced a style as anything produced by the early school. The war of the relics on the southern and western gateways exhibits a fine sense of composition and modelling. This school of Vidiśā situated on the highway between Mathura and Pratishṭhāna exerted a strong influence on the subsequent Mathura School of Sculpture which derived many of its ideas of composition of the various life-scenes of the Buddha in their symbolical form and also its technique and style. The southern gateway was carved by a guild of ivory workers of Vidiśā, *Vediśakehi dantakārehi rūpakammaṁ kataṁ*. The carvers have succeeded in the clear treatment of the bas-reliefs and figures either alone or in groups and based themselves on the simplicity and naturalness of their rendering. It is a great quality by which this early school was marked and which their patron, namely the wealthy merchants of Vidiśā and Ujjayinī specially liked. The sculptors were definitely advancing towards giving an increasing religious tone to the subjects handled by them as shown by the abundance of the religious symbols depicted in these bas-reliefs. Marshall criticised some of these scenes as mundane and sensuous but that was due to misunderstanding, for, as pointed out above, these were Elysian scenes of ideal happiness from the Uttarakuru land which were now put into great relief, and probably synchronised with the descriptions in the epics and Jātakas with which the scenes faithfully agree. It may also be noted that these Stūpas serve as commentaries on the many religious cults that were prevalent during the centuries prior to the Christian era and which were seeking marked embrace with Buddhism.

Stūpa II

Stūpa No. II is next to Stūpa No. I the most important monument at Sanchi. It stands on a small terrace projecting out from the hillside some three-fifty yards down its western slopes. It may be stated that the construction of

the three Stūpas was deliberately planned so as to enshrine the relics of the Buddha in Stūpa No. I, built in the most majestic form and sited on the most conspicuous spot, the relics of Buddha's two chief disciples, Sāriputta and Mahā Moggalāyana in Stūpa No. III on the hill-top itself and of the other great teachers and missionaries of religion who worked in the time of Aśoka in a Stūpa now labelled as Stūpa II on an artificially constructed terrace jutting from the hillside towards the plains.

In size and construction Stūpa II was almost a replica of Stūpa I, the main difference between the two being the decoration of the ground railing. Its diameter exclusive of the processional path and enclosing balustrade, was 47′; its height to the top of the dome 29′ and to the top of the crowning umbrella 37′. In the four quadrants of the ground railing there were 88 pillars. There were three railings, the one as the ground balustrade, the second the berm railing approached by stairways and the third on the top round the *harmikā*. But the ground railing is carved with many reliefs which give the balustrade its unique value and make it an outstanding landmark in the history of Indian art no less than of Buddhism. The subjects portrayed are generally similar to those on the gateways of the Great Stūpa. Among them, the four chief events of the Buddha's life are conspicuous: his birth (*Jāti*), his enlightenment (*Sambodhi*), his first sermon (*Dharmachakra-pravartana*), and his death (*Parinirvāṇa*)—each represented by its own peculiar symbol: the lotus, the *Pīpal* tree, the Wheel and the Stūpa. Then there are the familiar figures of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, many-hooded Nāgas and a host of real and fabulous animals, sometimes with riders and sometimes without, like those which adorn the false capitals on the gateways of the Great Stūpa: elephants, bulls, horses, deer, winged lions, *makaras* and griffins and other creatures of the fancy, also that do not occur on the gateways, such as horse-headed and fish-tailed men or centaurs with women on their backs (*kinnara mithuna*). Among plants, the favourite one is the lotus—magic symbol of birth and life and giver of bounteous gifts to mortals—sometimes quite simply treated, sometimes in rich and elaborate devices; among birds, the peacock, the goose, and the Sārasa are prominent; and among characteristic Buddhistic emblems other than those already mentioned, the *triratna*, *nandipada*, and *śrīvatsa*, and pillars crowned by lions or elephants. (Marshall).

The contingent of decorative designs including flowers, animals, human beings and divine figures was traditional and borrowed from the *repertoire* that we find in the Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina Āgamic literature. In the description of lotus railing (*padmavara vedikā*) as given in the *Rāyapasenīya Sutta*, we find conventionalised lists of such decorative motifs. There seems to be no doubt that these motifs of ornamental decoration were being used in wooden construction for many centuries from where the

stone carvers borrowed them with complete facility. The unique charm of such a railing became widely popular and accepted in such art centres as Mathura and Sarnath. The railing pillars of the earlier Jaina Stūpa at Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā show as if the ground balustrade of Sanchi Stūpa II was transferred with the variety of its decorative motifs and the simple natural style of carving. The few Śuṅga pillars at Sarnath are also as if replicas of the Sanchi balustrade. The age of these reliefs on the balusrade of Stūpa II may rightly be fixed on the basis of their style and palæography of inscriptions in the last quarter of the 2nd century B. C.

The smaller balustrades belonging to the stairway, berm and the *harmikā* are similar to those of Stūpa III both in form and construction. The uprights of the stairway are relieved both on their inner and outer faces with one complete and two half discs of varying patterns. Similar floral rosettes are also carved on the inner face of the landing balustrade but the outer faces are decorated with narrow bands of carving between the rosettes. On the other hand the berm balustrade or pillars of the second *parikramā* have merely plain disc medallions, on the inner face of which the central ones are sometimes omitted. But the discs on the outer face of the pillars of this projecting ledge are relieved with lotus designs and other floral or animal devices ; e. g. a lion, a bull or an elephant. The coping of the *harmikā* is also decorated on its inner side by a row of full-blown lotuses forming the *pushkaraśraj* design. The relic box, deposited inside a relic-chamber which itself was placed at two feet distance from the centre, contained four small caskets of steatite with *Śarīra dhātu* or the bodily relics of the ten missionaries sent by Aśoka to preach the doctrine, some of whom had also taken part in the Third Council of Pāṭaliputra. Although these teachers lived in the time of Aśoka, their relics must have rested for some time at different places until they were assembled to be enshrined together in this Stūpa which seems to have been a recognised practice in the Śuṅga period.

Decoration of the Ground Railing : The main centre of interest lies in the decorative reliefs carved on the inner and outer faces of the upright pillars of the ground railing. As mentioned earlier the subjects shown on the half and full rosettes of the pillars were organised on the basis of the prevailing folk-cults as interpreted by the artists and sculptors who seem to have taken their inspiration from domestic and folk art. The first thing that impresses is the lotus and its wavy creeper in infinite forms. The lotus is carved in the form of full-blown flowers, buds, leaves and either in a conventionalised form or growing in a natural form, the former as *Padma-latā* and the latter as *Vana-latā*. The carving of the lotus creeper and flowers in itself was the outcome of a complex cult of the lotus which had come down from the earliest times. The lotus was associated with the cult of Brahmā

who was said to have his seat on *pushkara* (*Brahma ha vai brahmāṇaṁ pushkare sasṛje*, Gopatha Br., 1. 1. 16) which was the symbol of the cosmos (*bhū-padmakośa*) and of Fire and Sun, the latter two conceived as blooming lotuses rising from the depths of the primeval water. The conception of a garland of lotuses (*pushkarašraj*) comprising both the earth and the heaven was Vedic. Along with it was the cult of Śrī-Lakshmī having a Vedic origin and the two freely mingled with each other with the positive result that Lakshmī was conceived of as Padminī (Goddess of Lotuses) standing amongst lotuses (*padme sthitām*), wearing a garland of lotuses or holding lotuses in both hands or standing on a Full Vase overflowing with lotus flowers and leaves. She is sometimes sprinkled over with water by elephants, also standing on lotus flowers. These variations are seen in these reliefs.

We also find the Pūrṇakumbha motif also called *Mahendrakumbha*, covered over with red and blue lotuses (*Padmotpalapidhāna*) ; Chakra worship, Stūpa worship, scenes of Uttarakuru, animal motifs, Kinnara-Mithuna, Śrīvatsa, Nāga, and Yaksha figures. Some of them may be noted as follows :

ŚĀLABHAÑJIKĀ : In ancient railings these were generally sixteen in one quadrant as actually found at Bharhut, making a total of sixty-four in the complete circular railing with twenty more for the re-entrant portion. The female figure in this pose was shown as holding the branch of an Aśoka tree (*Vāmahasta-grihītāgrāśoka*) with her left hand and standing in a graceful attitude (*līlāsupratishṭhita*), as depicted on the pillar No. 1 a.

Śrī-Lakshmī, Śrī-Devī, Gaja-Lakshmī or Lakshmī with two elephants or two lions, with a human couple also standing on two lotuses. [Fig. 75].

Śrī-Lakshmī on lotus, Lakshmī with lotuses, with two attendants and another woman standing between the door, with two attendants holding *Chhatra* and *Chāmara*. [Fig. 76]. Lotus bunch, elephant with lotuses, Lotus bunch from the jaws of a *Makara* having a Yaksha in the middle section ; *padmalatā* from the mouth of a tortoise ; rhinoceros with Padma—and elephant with Padmalatā, Simha with lotus. [Figs. 77 78]. Yaksha on tortoise with lotus stem ; Yaksha with Padmalatā ; Padmalatā from the navel of a Yaksha. [Figs. 79-80].

Chakra on four lions placed on the top of a pillar round which are four deer, depicting the Sarnath Pillar, Dharmachakra with eight spokes, Chakra worship, Bodhi Tree worship, Tree-in-railing.

STŪPA WORSHIP :—The Stūpa is of elongated cylindrical form and not hemispherical. It has the usual three railings but located on a high terrace which is decorated with vertical alternate bands of lotus rosettes and Śrīvatsa symbols both of

which point to the assimilating influences of Śrī-Lakshmī cult with that of the Stūpa. In the lowermost panel is the Śrī-Vṛiksha or Tree-of-Life which also points to the comprehensive nature of the Śrī-Devī worship. [Fig. 81].

ANIMALS :—Siṁha Saṅghāṭa ; lion with lotus ; bull ; elephant with rider ; horse with rider. These were part of the worship of the Four Great Animals, Mahā Ājāneya Paśu, a well-established cult in ancient time from the Indus Valley to the 19th century. [Their symbolism has been explained by us with a long list of references in our book, *Chakradhvaja*]. A two-humped camel (*dvikakudkramelaka*) which was a Central Asian animal, about which the Central Indian sculptors must have received information from some caravan trader. Pair of boars ; combating lion and elephant ; cow suckling the calf.

Śrīvatsa depicted about a dozen times had already become a sacred symbol and naturally associated with the Śrī-Lakshmī cult. Triratna symbol also depicted about a dozen times was pre-Buddhistic but accepted in the Buddhist, Jaina and Brāhmanical traditions.

UTTARAKURU :—It is a favourite subject on the Gateways of Stūpa I and is found here depicted in the form of Mithunas and Kalpalatā meanders. [Fig. 82]. Kinnara motif is shown both with Kinnarī riding with her husband or the centaur riding with his wife. [Fig. 83]. This is a motif repeated at Mathura and other places.

BIRDS :—This was the topic related to the ancient *Suparṇa Maha* ; we find here Garuḍa holding the Nāga in its beak and the Nāga coiled round the body of the bird, a motif continued in Mathura art ; a pair of Haṁsas (*haṁsa-mithuna*) ; a pair of cranes (*krauñchamithuna*). [Fig. 84].

YAKSHA : The popularity of the Yaksha cult cast its deep influence on the Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi and they are repeated on this railing of Stūpa II also as related to Uttarakuru and water cosmology. Lotus creepers are shown as issuing from the mouth or navel of pot-bellied squatting Yaksha figures. As the followers of Kubera they were accepted as the genii of wealth and auspicious jewels (*nidhi* and *bhadra maṇi*). A very peculiar figure is the Yaksha seated on a tortoise holding a sinuous lotus tree with Haṁsa lodged in it. [Fig. 85]. The main stem of the lotus is seen issuing out from his navel. This illustrates a happy mingling of the elements of the several ancient folk cults, viz. that of the Yakshas, Kūrma, Pushkara and Waters. Another form of Yaksha was that of a stout well-built male figure, resembling a wrestler, probably the same as *Nara* (as in the medallion on pillar 6a) because of which Kuber was called Naravāhana. On one pillar we find the figure of a king with two queens with three attendants holding an umbrella and flywhisk and at the bottom panel of the same the king driving in a chariot with his minister on an elephant. It

recalls the scene of Aśoka going to visit Bodhi shrine at Bodhgaya already depicted on the Western Gateway of the Stūpa I.

Stūpa III

On the plateau itself about fifty yards north-east of the Stūpa I is another monument called Stūpa III, which enshrines the relics of Sāriputra and Mahā Moggalāyana, the two great disciples of the Buddha. It is smaller in size; its diameter including the raised terrace but not the ground baustrade being 49′0″; its height 27′ or including the *harmikā* and umbrella 35′4″. The core is homogeneous throughout and composed of heavy unwrought blocks of local stone mixed with spalls (splinters). Apart from its size the only essential points in which Stūpa III differed from the Great Stūpa were the possession of one instead of four gateways, the decoration of its ground railing and the more hemispherical contour of its dome which was of a slightly later and more developed type. The ground railing has almost entirely disappeared, the work of demolition being done in ancient times to provide material for other monuments. There was a stairway with balustrade similar to that of Stūpa I in style, decoration and structural forms. There is only one gateway on the south of this Stūpa which is the latest of all the five *Toraṇas* at Sanchi and was added probably in the early parts of the first century A. D. The gateway is 17′ high and is enriched with reliefs in the same style as those on the four gateways of the Great Stūpa. No doubt, it was adorned with precisely the same class of figures in the round including Yakshas Yakshiṇīs and horsemen, and the same characteristic emblems of the faith, the *Triratna* and *Dharmachakra*.

On palæographical grounds Mr. Majumdar concludes that the inscriptions on the relic boxes, stairway and berm balustrades of this Stūpa belong to the same period as those on the ground, berm and stairway balustrades of Stūpa I, viz. to about the middle of the 2nd century B. C.

Some significant motifs on the railings and gateway of the Stūpa III are as follows: garland-bearing Yakshas which appear for the first time in the decoration of the meanders which in later art are known as Garland-bearing Erotes, in Mathura, Gandhāra and Amaravati. In the Mahāvaṁsa and Divyāvadāna they are known as *Mālādhārī Devāḥ* and are given a religious significance as one of the *Pañcha-rakshā* figures round an ideal city.

It is also indicated that a considerable give and take and mutual influencing was in progress amongst the manifold symbols and their twofold purpose, viz. decorative (*śobhārtha*) and apotropaic (*rakshārtha*) had fully mingled with each other. Other scenes include those of Stūpa worship, Bodhi Tree worship, Lion Pillar, Chakra pillar,

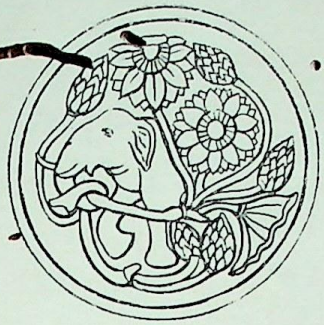


Fig. 77

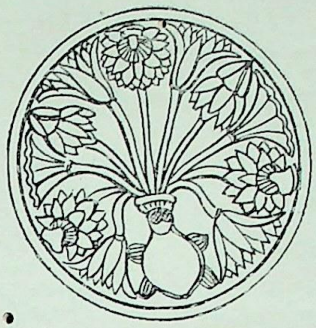


Fig. 78

Fig. 79

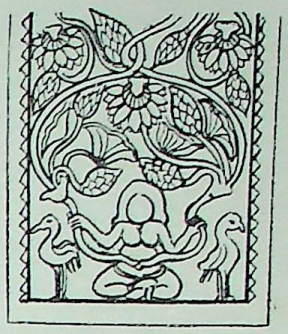


Fig. 80

Fig. 83

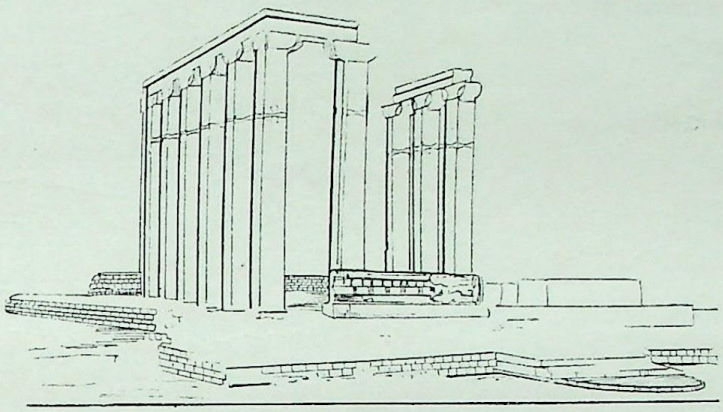


Fig. 86

Fig. 84

Fig. 80 y

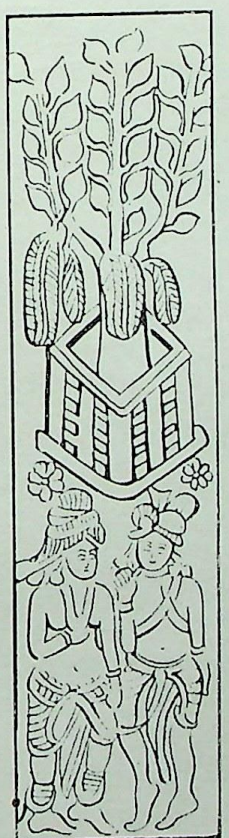


Fig. 82

Fig. 85

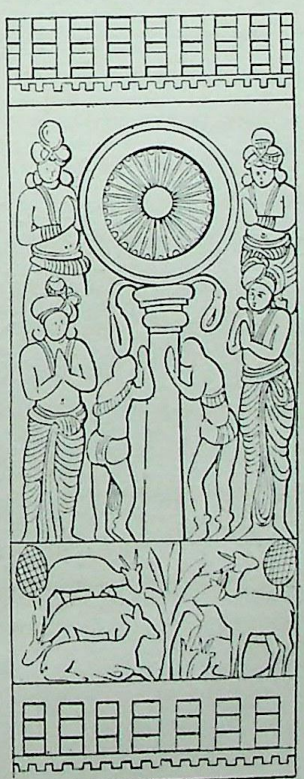


Fig. 85 x

Fig. 85 y

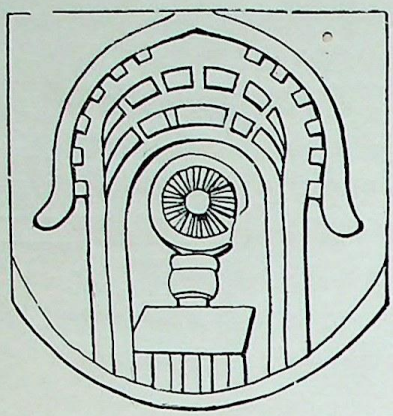


Fig. 87 a

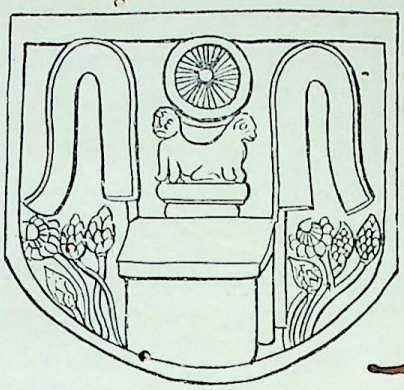


Fig. 87 b

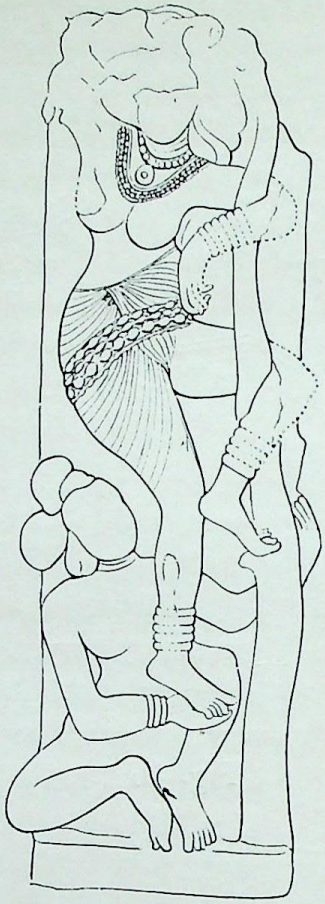


Fig. 88

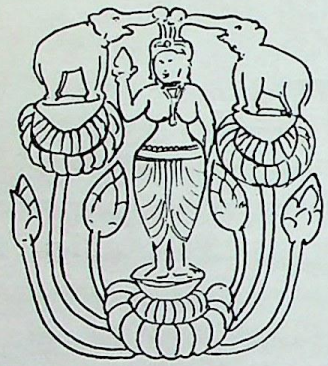


Fig. 89

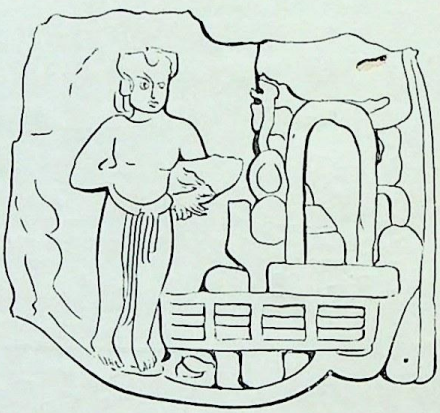


Fig. 90

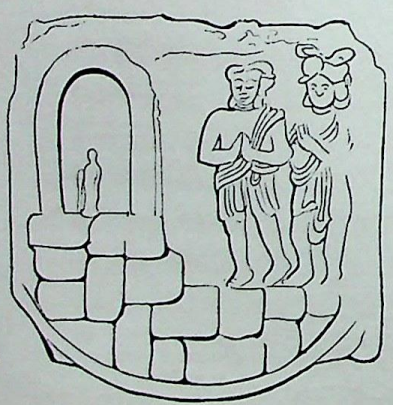


Fig. 91

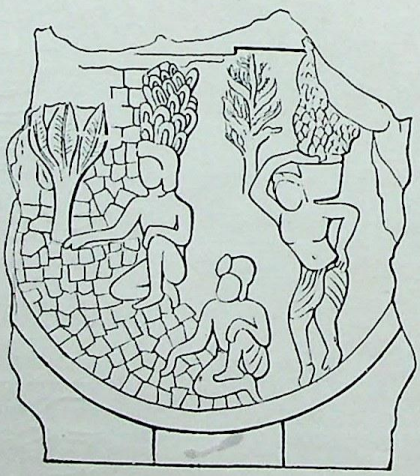


Fig. 93

Fig. 92

Chakra worship, fish-tailed Makara with lotus creepers issuing from their mouth, five-hooded Nāgarāja, *kīchaka* or atlante dwarfs holding lotus bunch, Gaja-Lakshmī, addorsed lions, bulls, horses, elephants (*saṅghāṭa*), kalpalatā and several other scenes of Uttarakuru with couples enjoying water-sports and garden-sports. There is a definite development in the number of newly conceived motifs or in the form in which the old ones are depicted, e.g. Indra's Vaijayanta palace together with the Nandana forests on the slopes of Mount Meru. On the two sides of the lower-most architrave elaborate scenes of Uttarakuru are depicted including Kalpalatā meanders producing ornaments and issuing from the mouths of Yakshas which points to the association of the original motif with the region of Vaiśravaṇa, a conception which later on was perfected in that of the capital Alakā, the Happy Abode of the Yakshas. All the above symbols severally and in combination were accepted as motifs of religion and decoration and this was the happy approach accorded to them both in life and art.

AŚOKA PILLAR—There were many pillars on the Sanchi plateau, mostly of the Gupta age but the earliest and most remarkable is the Pillar of Aśoka near the South Gateway of the Stūpa distinguished by its perfect workmanship and bearing an inscription. It is now a broken stump but the lion capital bearing on the drum a row of Haṁsas (Haṁsamālā) is still preserved in the museum. The pillar, when in tact, was about 42′ in height and consisted of a round and slightly tapering monolithic shaft, with a purāṇaghaṭa and foliage top as on the Sarnath pillar surmounted by an abacus and four lions back to back; the whole is finely finished and polished to a remarkable lustre from top to bottom. It must have been the outcome of the Emperor's personal interest in the monuments. The abacus is adorned with four honeysuckle designs separated one from the other by pairs of geese. The lions afford a noble example of the sculptor's art as seen in their spirited vitality although somewhat conventionalised, the tense development of the muscles, the swelling veins, the strong set of the claws and the treatment of the manes in short schematic curls. The sandstone out of which the pillar was carved come from the quarries of Chunar several hundred miles away and it speaks to the great skill of Aśoka's engineers to have transported a block of stone over forty feet in length and weighing almost as many tons and hoisting it up the steep hillside at Sanchi. (See p. 101).

TWO APSIDAL TEMPLES:—There are at Sanchi two apsidal temples numbered 18 and 40 which are of Śuṅga age and in architecture resembled the rock-cut *Chaitya* halls at Karle. The first is the apsidal shrine directly opposite to the south gateway of Stūpa I. Its apse is enclosed not by columns, as in the cave temples but by a solid wall. The inner and outer walls around the apse were constructed of dry stone masonry. The older pillars and pilasters of the nave are monoliths, square in section and 17′ high, slightly tapering towards the top. Within the apse of the temple there

once stood a Stūpa which contained a steatite vase. [Fig. 86]. The other apsidal temple numbered 40 stood in the southern area. Its plan consisted of an apse, nave, *pradakshiṇāpatha* with an entrance in each of its two longar sides a feature which recalls to mind the Sudāmā and other Maurya cave-shrines in the Barābar hills but differing from the cave temples of Western India which have one or more entrances directly opposite the apse. There were several restorations but the two original walls were in the form of an apse at the southern end, i.e. having a *Vṛittāyata* or *Besara* form.

Their masonry was rough and severed as foundation to a superstructure which was also apsidal in plan and mainly of wood, replaced subsequently by stone pillars set upon the same plinth and ranged in five rows of ten each. Similar apsidal temples were also found at Sarnath and Ahichchhatra, all of which go back probably to the Maurya-Śuṅga times.

Bodhgaya

Bodhgaya is the site where Buddha obtained his enlightenment. It is six miles to the south of Gaya and at a very short distance from the Village of Urale, ancient Uruvilva which was the hermitage of Ṛishi Kāśyapa and also the seat of Sujātā. It is said that Upagupta pointed out to Aśoka that Buddha obtained his enlightenment at this place and the latter built here a Bodhi Temple. The tree was known as the *Bodhi Druma* or the Tree of Wisdom. The Throne or Seat of Buddha was called *Bodhi Maṇḍa* ; the temple created over the throne *Mahā Bodhi Vihāra*, and the great monastery close by was called *Mahā Bodhi Saṅghārāma*. The original Bodhi shrine erected by Aśoka no longer exists at Bodhgaya but the true representation of the same occurs at Bharhut in a bas-relief which shows that it was an open pavilion supported on pillars in the middle of which was the *Vajrāsana* throne decorated in front with four flat pilasters. Behind the throne appears the trunk of the Bodhi Tree, which rises up high above the building, and on each side of the tree there is a combined symbol of the *triratna* and the *dharmachakra*, standing on the top of a short pillar. On each side of the *Vajrāsana*-room there is a side-room of the same style. The top of the throne is ornamented with flowers, but there is no figure of the Buddha. It was conceived in the style of the *pushpagrahaṇī vedikā* or the platform for receiving flower-offering as depicted near the Stūpas at Mathura and other places. During repairs the original *Bodhi Maṇḍa* was actually discovered after removing the two subsequent restorations and it was found to have been made of polished sandstone with four short pilasters in front, exactly as depicted in the Bharhut bas-relief. The sandstone and its polish were similar to those of other Aśokan monuments.

Round it Aśoka had built an enclosure with a curcuit of about 258 ft. measuring outside. It was originally of brick which still exists in the foundation but

later on replaced by a palisade (*vedikā*) consisting of uprights (*thabha*), cross-bars (*sūci*) and copings (*unhīsa*), which is very similar to the railings at Bharhut and at Sanchi but chronologically stands midway between them, circa end of the 2nd century B. C. The inscriptions engraved on it show it was the gift of Kuraṅgī, queen of king Indrāgnimitra, and Nāgadevā, queen of Brahmamitra. There were 64 pillars, each with a section of 14″/12″, height of 6′8″, coping 1′2″, plinth 2′2″, thus with a total height of 10′.

The general scheme of decoration consists of friezes and rosettes of the lotus flower on the copings and the uprights respectively marking it as the lotus palisade (*Padmavaravedikā*). A number of other subjects in amplification of the Uttarakuru motif together with Jātaka scenes and historical scenes of Buddha's life are depicted, as for example, Mithuna figures either shown together with *Kalpavṛiksha* tree producing ornaments hanging on the bevelled corners of the pillars, or shown separately on the front and back sides of the posts; *mithuna* seated on couch; a palace with *toraṇa* and *vedikā* showing a male with two women behind the railing; Gaja-Lakshmī representing the ancient cult of Śrī-Devī; worship of the Bodhi Tree with a throne and *chhatra*, by a *mithuna* figure which was naturally a very important representation at Bodhgaya; Dharmachakra worship either placed on the Bodhi Maṇḍa or on pillar (Fig. 87); *triratna* on Bodhi Maṇḍa; Stūpa and its worship; Yaksha Śaṅkukarṇa (showing the *guhyaka* or *kiṅkarshikas* with upraised ears); a dryad or treenymph climbing on a tree with the help of a Yaksha seated below (Fig. 88); Mother and child with a goat (on a pedestal); the bold figure of a woman standing on a *pūrṇakumbha* reminds of a kindred figure found at Mathura but standing amongst lotuses and the Bodhgaya specimen also seems to be that of Śrī-Lakshmī in a new idiom (Fig. 89). Amongst Buddha's life-scenes we find the Gandharva Pañchaśikha holding a harp standing outside the Indraśaila cave (Fig. 90); a *mithuna* standing outside a cave in *añjali-mudrā* (Fig. 91); a ṛishi seated in front of a *guhā* with the Vajrāsana inside (Fig. 92); the two latter obviously showing the mingling of the Uttarakuru and Buddhist traditions in a new context; a mithuna playing on a diceboard having sixty-four squares, divided into eight rows of eight squares each; gift of Jetavana (Fig. 93); a group of elephants offering worship to the Bodhi Tree, a scene treated much more elaborately at Bharhut and Sanchi; amongst Jātakas the sculptors of Bodhgaya have only a restricted number, e. g. Chhaddanta Jātaka, Padakusalamāṇava Jātaka showing the horseheaded (*Aassamukhī*) Yakshī and the young Brāhmaṇa (Fig. 27c), Vessantara Jātaka, Kinnara Jātaka and several others not identified.

A strong point at Bodhgaya is the representation of animal figures, e.g. winged lion; winged horse; winged elephant; fish-tailed human being (*nara-machchha*); bull, ram,

goat, *makara* and several other *Īhāmṛiga* or fabulous animals (Fig. 94). On one of the pillars is shown a figure riding on a fish-tailed elephant (*jalebha* or *gaja-machchha*) and another on the same pillar riding on a lion-headed fish-tailed aligator (*magara-machchha*), other mythical land and water animals rendered in beautiful friezes are shown on the copings and provide a handsome introduction to the subjects in the art of Sanchi and Mathura. It is clear that the carvers at Bodhgaya elaborated their legecy from Bharhut and passed it on to their successors at Sanchi and Mathura in a more elaborate form. They show their originality in evolving new subjects, specially the winged figures and in developing a style which is more direct, simple and unified, avoiding as far as possible complex or synoptic treatment as found at Sanchi. They also had formulated their own ideas of perspective and isometric rendering as seen on a pillar where a rather complex design with two sides of a bigger railing enclosing a smaller railing round a tree and another pillar with a railing on one side shows a contingent of complex buildings.

The temple at Bodhgaya underwent several restorations, the most important one being in the Gupta period when it was known as *Bṛihadgandhakuṭī prāsāda* on the site of *Vajrāsana*. This was even further subjected to a very thorough renovation by the Burmese in 1035-1079 A. D., when much of the stucco work was done and also the cross-legged Buddha seated in an earth-touching attitude.

Chaṅkramaṇa-Chaitya (Pali, *Chaṅkama*) : This was the name given to the pathway near the Vajrāsana Throne where Buddha used to take his walk and it is stated that after his Sambodhi he walked here for seven days immersed in profound meditative thought about the new knowledge he had obtained. The terraced walk that still exists is 53′ long. It was a wall 3′ high and 3′ 6″ broad, flanked on the two sides by eleven pillar-bases in stone which appear to have been added later and indicate that the promenade was once covered. The pillar bases are much similar to such stone bases (*Kumbha*) found at Mathura (Vogel's *Catalogue*, pl. II c-d).

On one of them stood the magnificent female figure with her feet placed on a Pūrṇaghaṭa most probably Lakshmī. From the earliest times the Buddhist regarded the Ratna Chaṅkrama Chaitya as a monument of a special sanctity associated with the life of Buddha.

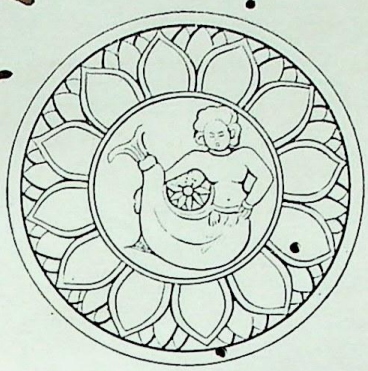


Fig. 94 a

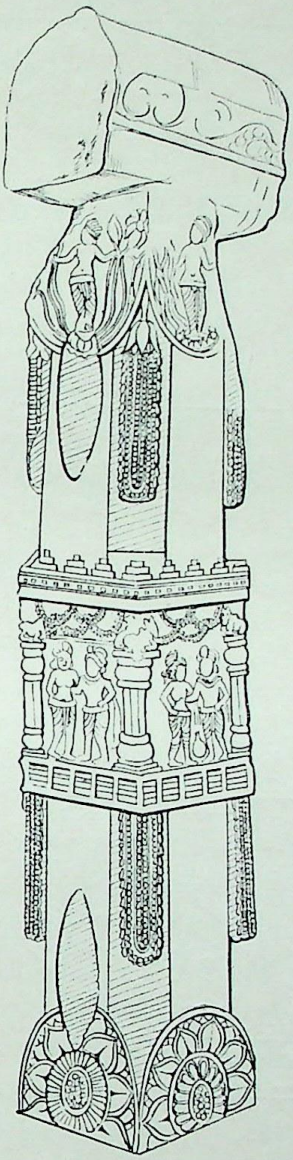


Fig. 89 a

Fig. 94 b

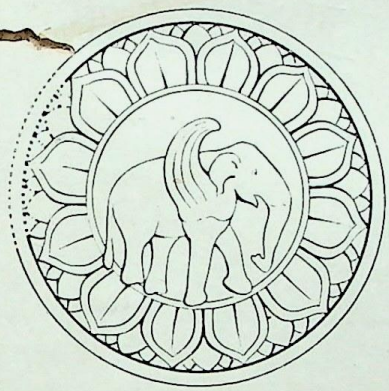


Fig. 94 c

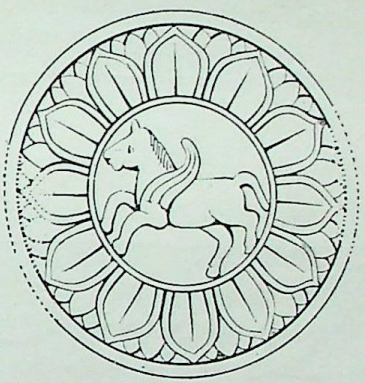


Fig. 94 d

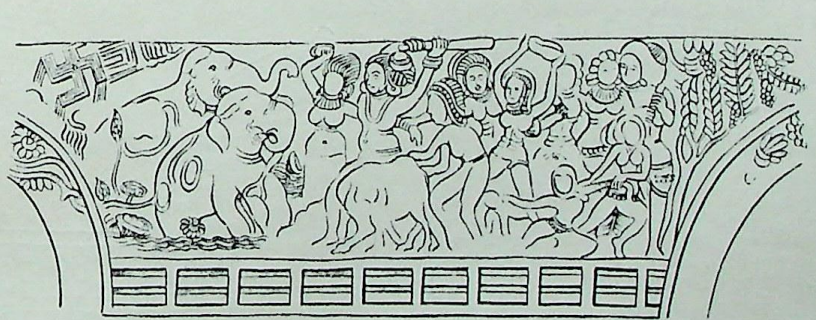


Fig. 95

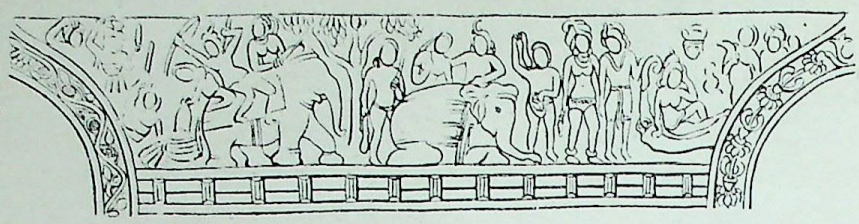


Fig. 96

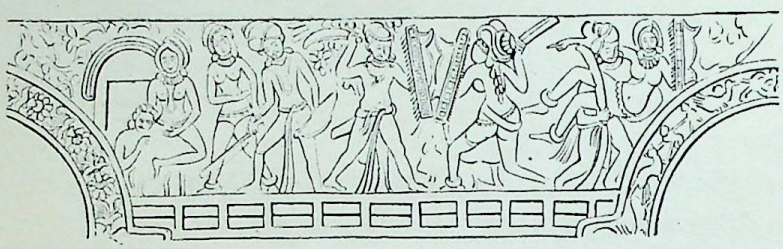


Fig. 97

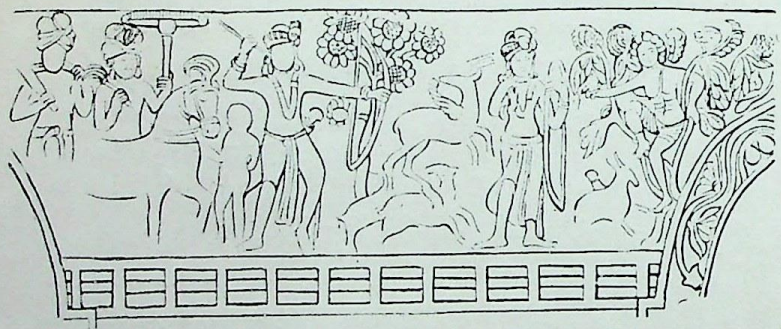


Fig. 98

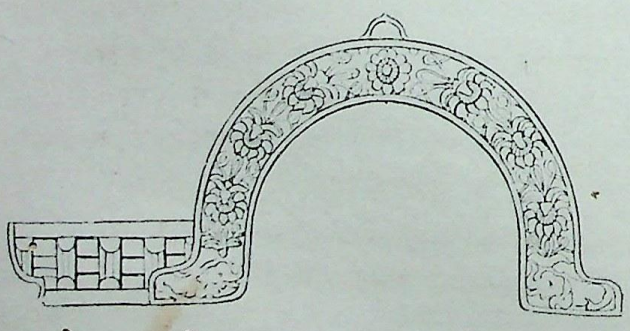


Fig. 100

Fig. 101

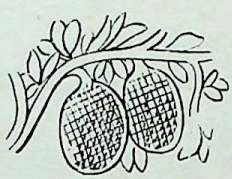


Fig. 102

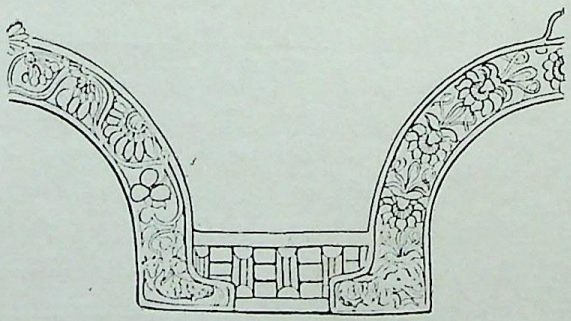


Fig. 99

CHAPTER IX

Rock-Cut Architecture

9 (*a*). Udaigiri and Khaṇḍagiri Caves

The movement of art creativity of the Śuṅga period has a major centre in Orissa in the East where about five miles northwest of Bhuvanesvar a group of caves was excavated in the Khaṇḍagiri-Udaigiri hills separated by a revine. These hills of sandstone formation are honeycombed with caves or cells inhabited by monks in ancient times. They are in different stages of architectural evolution, those in Khaṇḍagiri being small like dens and in Udaigiri respectable excavations. Ordinary caves are characterised by a chamber shaded by a pillared verandah in front ; in some cases the anti-chamber is divided into two or three cells (*Garbha, Dvigarbha, Trigarbha*). More elaborate caves are two-storeyed (*Dvibhūmika*), the upper storey in some cases receding back from the lower one, with an open terrace in front. A peculiar feature of the caves is a bench of stone or podium (*āsana peṇḍikā, āsana piṇḍikā*) running round the three sides of the front verandah about 1-1½ ft in hight. The two sides of the verandah are hollowed out at the top to make small cupboard like cells (*Bhāṇḍāgārikā*) for storage of sundry articles. The doors are very small (Rāṇīgumphā, 3′11″ X 2′) requiring the monks to crawl into the cells which are separated from each other by a thin stone wall 3″ thick.

The number of caves is 35 in all, 19 being in the Udaigiri hill and 16 in the Khaṇḍagiri. Those at Udaigiri are the Rāṇīgumphā, Svargapurī or Alakāpurī, Jaya-vijayagumphā, Vaikuṇṭhapura, Pātālapurī, Mañchapurī, Gaṇeśagumphā, Hāthīgumphā, Sarpagumphā, Vyāghragumphā, Jagannāthagumphā, Ṭhakurānī, Vajradhārā, Rasui and Haridāsgumphā. The Khaṇḍagiri caves are Navamunigumphā, Satabharagumphā, Ākāśagaṅgā, Devasabhā, Anantagumphā. The caves are definitely part of a Jaina monastic establishment patronised by King Khāravela of Kaliṅga whose inscription is engraved on the underside of the projecting ledge of the Hāthīgumphā cave which seems to have been a natural cave. He was a mighty emperor and dynamic personaltiy who ruled in about 160 B. C. which should be the time of the rock-excavation. He himself rebuilt the capital by providing the various contingents of the city including its ramparts and gateway (*Gopura prākāra*) and reconstructed the lake embankments restoring also the palace named *Vidyādharādhivāsa*, repaired a water canal (*praṇāli*) dug in the past by the Nandas and brought it to the city and himself built a new palace named *Mahāvijaya Prāsāda.* He defeated

Behasatimitta (Bṛihaspatimitra) King of Magadha and brought back an image of Jina which Nandarāja had removed from Kaliṅga. It was he who in his 13th year excavated on the Kumārī Parvata (the ancient name of Udaigiri and Khaṇḍagiri hills) cells for the living of monks (*jīvadeha sajikā parikhātā*) at the site of this establishment known as *Arhat Nisīdiyā*.

The rock excavations were distinguished by raised terraces (*samutthāpita hitā*) of beautiful form (*varākāra*) and several architectural designs (*aneka yojana*). These were supported on pillars (*thambha*) and having ante-chambers shining like crystals (*vaidūrya garbha*).

Finally he organised a great festive celebration in honour of these religious establishments. Such was the glory of Kshemarāja Vṛiddharāja Bhikshurāja and Dharmarāja Khāravela, an emperor of mighty conquests (*mahāvijayarājā*).

A short inscription of the chief queen (*agramahishī*) of Khāravela in the Mañchapurī cave calls it a *leṇa* (cell) for the use of the Jaina monks (*samaṇanām*).

RĀṆĪGUMPHĀ: It is the largest and most important of all the excavations, being elaborately carved: it is noted for commodious wings, large number of cells and spacious quadrangle in front. It consists of two storeys, each with a central wing and two abutting wings on the three sides of the courtyard (49′ × 24′). The length of the upper main verandah is 62′ and that of the lower 44′. The upper storey is not placed directly over the lower but recedes leaving an open terrace in front of the verandah which is approached by stairways and from where the spectators could look down on the ground floor.

There are no chaitya halls or shrines for worship in the Orissan caves as they are found in western India. In addition to this unique feature the architectural planning of the three enclosing gallaries round the courtyard with one side used as frontal approach, together with the broad and spacious verandah points to some special purpose which was in the minds of those responsible for these excavations. From the beginning the Jaina monks were interested in the life of the community. It appears that these large double-storeyed caves served the purpose of popular entertainment by the performance of dramatic shows. This is chiefly indicated by the scenes carved on the back wall of the verandah, illustrating some famous dramatic legends from Indian literature and folklore. There are the well known scenes of the Udayana-Vāsavadattā story which has been identified beyond any doubt and also probably the story of Duḥshyanta and Śakuntalā. The frieze occupying upper part of the verandah of the upper storey in the Rāṇīgumphā cave contains seven bas-reliefs within

the interspaces of the eight doorways. Of the scenes in the frieze of the Gaṇeshgumphā only two are of major importance.[1]

Briefly they may be described as follows:

(A) Rāṇigumphā. Scene I: (Mitra, plate VI) a celestial figure carrying a basket of lotus garlands.

Scene 7 (Mitra, Plate VI). The counterpart of scene 1 on the proper left hand side of the frieze.

Scene 2 represents three elephants who seem to be attacking a panicky crowd. In the fore-front are shown a female and a male figure defending themselves with a heavy club. Behind them are a number of female figures either seeking shelter in various attitudes of consternation, or by their gesture offering to assist in repelling the attack. Fergusson incorrectly thought that it probably represented some episode in the story of the conquest of Ceylon by Vijaya where elephants, *Yakshas* and *Rakshiṇīs* performed important parts. (*Cave Temples*, p. 81). [Fig. 95].

Scene 3 is one of the best preserved and most interesting of the series. It consists of eight figures, four female and four male in four groups. The first represents a man apparently asleep inside a doorway, and a women sitting by him watching. In front of these is a woman leading a man by the hand apparently to introduce him to the first pair. Beyond this on the right a man and a woman are engaged in mortal combat holding swords and shields in their hands. Beyond these on the extreme right a man carries off in his arms a woman who still bears her shield in her hand though she has dropped the sword and is pointing with the finger of her right hand towards the fighting first pair. (Mitra, plate VIII, p. 8; *Cave Temples*, p. 82). This scene is repeated on the frieze of the Gaṇeshgumphā and is often described as the rape scene.

Scene 4: In the first part of the bas-relief are three attendants a horse and its groom restraining him. The foremost attendant holds a fly-whisk in his right hand and a *chhatra* in his left which shows that the principal figure who has alighted from the horse is a king. In the second part of the carving the royal figure is shown holding a bow in his left hand and arrows in the right and about to shoot at a herd of deer running in front of him. In between them is a blossoming tree. In the third part of the story we see the royal personage having withdrawn his bow from action which

1. Scenes one to seven in the Rāṇīgumphā cave have been amply illustrated by Dr. Rajendralal Mitra in his '*Antiquities of Orissa*' Vol. II (1880), plates VI to XI and the two scenes of the Gaṇeshgumphā on plate XV and XVI of the same book. They were described in detail in the *Cave Temples Of India* (Fergusson and Burgess, 1880), pp. 81-84 Rāṇīgumphā and pp. 86-88 Gaṇeshgumphā.

is now hung on the left arm. He is standing in front of a tree on which is seated a young female figure. At the foot of the tree is a deer. Fergusson identified this as a scene from the Sāma Jātaka which is very doubtful. (Mitra, plate IX, p. 8 ; *Cave Temples*, p. 83).

Scene 5 carved in the central compartment, shows a group of female figures apparently approaching to worship a saint seated cross-legged (Mitra, plate X, pp. 8-9 ; *Cave Temples*, p. 83).

Scene 6 : The scene consists of there amorous couples seated on couches and enjoying drinks. It is similar to those depicted at Sanchi. (Mitra, plate XI, p. 9 ; *Cave Temples*, p. 83-84).

(B) GAṆESHGUMPHĀ—The frieze in the upper storey of the Gaṇeshgumphā consisted of three complete and two half reliefs. Two only are carved with figures. The end ones and the centre compartment are filled with the traditional 'Buddhist rails.

Scene 1 : Of the remaining two scenes one contains a repetition of the abduction scene of the Rāṇigumphā cave. 'There are the same eight persons, and all similarly employed in both. Only that in this one the sculpture is very superior to that in the other and the attitude of the figures more easy and graceful.' (*Cave Temples*, p. 87 ; Mitra, plate XV, p. 10).

Scene 2 : The bas-relief contains sixteen persons. In the first part of the story we see a party of soldiers on foot, dressed in kilts and moving in the act of pursuing. In front of them are three persons on an elephant. The hindmost is a male figure showering coins from a purse. The middle one is also a male figure more prominent than the first one and shooting with bow and arrows in the direction of the pursuing soldiers. The third person is a woman driving the elephant with a goad held in her right hand. A tree separates this scene from the next one. In the second part of the scene the elephant is kneeling down on the ground and the riders are alighting. In the third part of the scene we see the same three persons standing and moving. The last one has a big bundle or a container on his shoulder. [Fig. 96].

In the fourth scene the female figure is seated on a rich cushion in a disconsolate mood and her companion is trying to console her. (Mitra, plate XVI, p. 10; *Cave Temples*, p. 88). These two scenes were also illustrated by wood-cut blocks on plate 44, Vol. VII (1838) of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal by Major Kittoe as part of his Journal on a tour in Orissa; pp. 679-685).

The important point about these different scenes forming part of the two friezes is the fact that they illustrate independent scenes. As remarked by Dr. R.L,

Mitra "Each frame is complete by itself and except in outline and general character bears no relation to its neighbour." (*Antiquities of Orissa*, Vol. II, p. 4). Fergusson remarked "At one time I was inclined to believe that the scenes represented in the sculptures here and in Rānīkā nūr (i. e. Rāṇīgumphā) were continuous and formed part of one connected history. A more careful study, however, of the matter with the increased knowledge we now possess, has convinced me that this is not the case, and that each division in the storeyed bas-relief must be treated as separate subject. In this instance (i e. Gaṇeshgumphā) it seems that the sculptor purposely left the central compartment blank in order to separate the two so completely that no one should make the mistake of fancying that there was any connection between them." (*Cave Temples*, p. 87),

It is possible to identify with the same certainty the second scene in the Gaṇeshgumphā cave with an episode in the Vāsavadattā story. Scene 5 of Rāṇīgumphā frieze seems to represent the story of Śakuntalā.

Vāsavadattā-Udayana story. The clue to this identification is furnished by three terracotta plaques recently discovered from the ancient site of Kauśāmbī, once the capital of king Vatsarāja Udayana. They are now deposited in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras and all are obviously from the same original mould. They illustrate the tensest part of the Vāsavadattā-Udayana legend, the flight of the lovers from Ujjayinī on the back of a female elephant in the company of their court jester Vasantaka. The Kauśāmbī plaques have been published in detail in the Journal of the UP Historical Society.[1] In this new light the scene of the Gaṇeshgumphā cave becomes clear. Both in the stone relief and the terracotta plaques the pursuers at the back of the elephant are the soldiers of the king of Ujjayinī. They are divided from their main job by Vasantaka who from his seat on the back of the elephant is raining a shower of coins which the soldiers greedily begin to pick up. In the terracotta plaque Udayana is seated on the elephant and holds the lute Ghoshavatī in his right hand. In the sculpture he is shown shooting at the soldiers. The pose of Vāsavadattā is identical in both the terracotta and the stone relief. She is driving her own elephant with a goad in her right hand. Whereas the terracotta plaque depicts only the flight scene, the stone relief supplements it by adding a couple of subsidiary related scenes enacted in Udayana's capital at Kauśāmbī. In the second part of the scene separated from the first by a tree which marks the end of the forest Udayana and Vāsavadattā are out of danger and seem to have reached their capital. They are alighting from their elephant who is kneeling on the ground.

1. Rai Krishnadasa, 'Vāsavadattā-Udayana Terracotta Plaque from Kauśāmbī', *JUPHS*, Pannalal Special Number, 1945, pp. 82-90.

In the third part Vasantaka is shown with a bag on his shoulder, evidently the bag of coins, and Udayana is leading Vāsavadattā to his palace. The fourth scene shows the disconsolate lady Vāsavadattā inside the harem and the king is engaged in consoling her.

The story of Udayana is at present available in Buddhist, Jaina and Brāhmanical literature ;[1] but it is essentially a love romance and there are no differences based on religion in the main outline of the story. The scene relating to the flight of Udayana and Vāsavadattā on the elephant from Ujjayinī forms a common part of all the versions. The terracotta plaques from Kosam and the stone reliefs in the Udaigiri cave—both assignable to the 2nd century B. C.—provide the archæological evidence of the main episode of the Udayana legend as it was current in north and east India. The main outlines are essentially the same in both, the only notable difference being the presence of the lute Ghoshavatī in the hands of Udayana in the terracotta scene and its absence in the stone relief. The lute plays a prominent part in the drama of Bhāsa and the version of the story on the terracotta with the lute in it may have been bsed on the same original as the drama of Bhāsa.

Scene of Mad Elephant—Scene 2 of the Rāṇīgumphā frieze (Mitra, plate VII) can easily be identified with one of the well known episodes in the Udayana legend, viz. the scene of the infuriated elephant Nalagiri of the king of Ujjayini getting out of control and attacking a panicky crowd in a public street and its ultimate pacification by the musical charm of Udayana. [Fig. 95]. In the story of Hemachandra the scene occurs as follows :

"One day Nalagiri pulled up his post, knocked down two elephant-drivers and roaming as he liked terrified the townspeople. 'How is that elephant, which is controlled by no one, to be subdued ?' The king asked Abhaya who suggested, 'Have king Udayana sing,'. Commanded by the king, 'Sing to Nalagiri', Udayana and Vāsavadattā sang to him. As a result of hearing his song, the elephant Nalagiri was thrown

1. The Hindu version of the Vāsavadattā-Udayana episode occurs in the 2nd book of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* as a part of the whole legend of Udayana. The dramas of Bhāsa and later on of Harsha are versions of the story. The Buddhist form of the story is found in the early Pali literature and all the versions have been discussed by Burlingama in his book : *Buddhist Legends*, pt. I, p. 62 (HOS 28). Although references to Udayana are found in a germinal form in the Jaina Āgama literature, specially the *Āvaśyakasūtra*, the complete love story of Udayana and Vāsavadattā is given only in the three later Jaina works, viz. *Triśashṭiśalākā-purushacharita* of Hemachandra (12 century), *Kumārapālapratibodha* of Somaprabha (1185 AD), and the *Mṛigāvatīcharitra* of Malādhārī Devaprabha (13th century). The commentary of Haribhadra on the *Āvaśyakasūtra* was one of the sources of Devaprabha.

and made captive. Then the king gave Abhaya another boon which he kept in reserve also."

Rape scene—The so-called rape scene in the Rāṇīgumphā and Gaṇeshgumphā caves cannot be identified with any certainty. The first half of the relief depicting two pairs of male and female figures have a seeming connection with the Vāsavadattā story, viz. Udavana thrown into prison as a captive by King Chaṇḍa Pradyota and Vāsavadattā stealthily visiting him. In the second scene Vāsavadattā or a female attendant is leading Vasantaka into the presence of Udayana. But the third and the fourth scenes, viz. the scene of the mortal combat between a man and a woman and the forceful carrying away of the latter by the former do not agree with this explanation. [Fig. 97].

Royal hunting scene. Dushyanta-Śakuntala scene. The whole makeup of this very interesting scene (No. 4 in Rāṇīgumphā cave ; Mitra, plate IX) unmistakably points to the story of King Dushyanta visiting the hermitage of sage Kaṇva and falling in love at first sight with Śakuntalā. The different stages in the relief are definite and clear. In the beginning the king arrives with his soldiers ; his own presence indicated by a horse with an empty back followed by an attendant holding fly-whisk and an umbrella, the two signs of royalty. In the next scene the king is hunting and shoots his arrows at a herd of frightened deer. In the third scene the leader of the herd is ushered the king into the presence of a beautiful woman. The king has withdrawn his bow and is in the act of looking at her or conversing with her. The female figure rests on the lower branch of a tree and the deer crouches at the foot of the tree. [Fig. 98].

This version of the story is nearer to the legend of Dushyanta and Śakuntalā as given in Ādiparva of the *Mahābhārata* (chapters 63-64, Poona critical edition). It is stated there that Dushyanta once equipped a hunting expedition and following his game from one forest to another reached the hermitage alone. He found it lonely except for a maiden who was the daughter of the sage and who entered into conversation with him. The king cunningly accosted her by saying he had come to pay his homage to sage Kaṇva. The girl thereupon said that her father had left for another part of the forest to gather fruits. Then the king questioned her as to her identity and as to how sage Kaṇva practising self-control could have her as his daughter. Śakuntalā in reply related the story of her birth from the union of Menakā with Viśvāmitra. As soon as she had finished, the king openly offered his love to her which she after some hesitation and assurance accepted. In this simple fabric there is no place for the female friends of Śakuntalā, viz. Priyaṁvadā and Anasūyā whom Kālidāsa introduces in his drama for the first and also none of the sophisticated overtures of love from either side.

These romantic love stories formed part of the common literary and art heritage of ancient India and their introduction in the *repertoire* of carving in the Jaina cave in the extreme east of India is proof of their universal popularity.

The verandahs are supported on pillars with simple brackets. On one side of the upper terrace there is a spacious throne with arms and a footrest probably intended for the chief abbot of the monastery.

The interspaces between the springing arches are occupied by horizontal bands of rail design (*vedikā śobhāpaṭṭī*) similar to that in the western Indian caves. The rails consist of uprights and three crossbars which are quite plain without any rosettes. [Fig. 99]. But the sculptors of Rāṇīgumphā, Gaṇeshagumphā and of others were certainly fond of the lotus design with which they have beautifully ornamented the bands of arches and the bas-reliefs. [Fig. 100]. This shows that they were in possession of the same decorative *repertoire* as the master-stone carvers of Central India. Above the rails are carved human figures in various postures in low relief depicting scenes to be described below. The semi-circular arch bands contain the bas-reliefs of scrolls and various ornamental devices, issuing from the mouths of a lion, elephant or deer. Amongst religious symbols are found Bodhi Tree within railing and scenes of Stūpa-worship similar to those at Sanchi, Bharhut and Bodhgaya. On a tympanum is found the *triratna* as well as the *svastika* symbol. In the right hand corner of the upper storey is carved a male figure (4′6″ high) depicting a Scythian soldier wearing the northern dress, viz. a tightfitting coat, girdle from which is slung a short sword sheathed in scabbard, buskined boots covering the feet and legs upto the middle of the calf. [Fig. 101]. The presence of drinking scenes and of jack fruits as containers of wines similar to those at Bharhut are reminiscent of the *Kalpavṛiksha* motifs and traditions relating to Uttarakuru which were also described by Jaina tradition. [Fig. 102].

Another noticeable scene is the capture of elephants by monkeys, leading them in a triumphal procession [Fig. 103], and the turning of a monkey into an ascetic. [Fig. 104]. Among other animals are seen a well-caprisoned horse, winged deer and a bull with a female rider. [Fig. 105].

As mentioned earlier the special architectural feature of these caves is the row of arches or the arcading technique so designed as to support the bases of the arch on pilaster capitals of addorsed animals. The shape of the arch instead of being a horse-shoe is invariably semi-circular in the Orissan caves. The pillars of the verandahs have square shafts with vase capitals and simple brackets as in the Rāṇīgumphā and more elaborate addorsed animal capitals as elsewhere. The festooning female figures (*toraṇa-śālabhañjikā*) between the pillar and bracket in the Anantagumphā

is more primitive than the Sanchi figures in a similar position. In the Manchapurī caves this place is taken by a horse with rider in oblique posture which became the prototype of the later *toraṇa-vyāla* figures as seen in the Gupta art of Sarnath.

GAṆESHGUMPHĀ : It is the next important cave in the Udaigiri group, consisting of only one storey having an ante-chamber of two cells (*dvigarbha layaṇa*), a pillared verandah (30′ long by 60′ deep) which is approached by a staircase (*sopāna*) flanked by two guardian elephants, a motif appearing here for the first time. The verandah (*mukhamaṇḍapa*) was supported on five pillars and two pilasters. The pillars are of extreme simplicity being square on the top and below and octagonal (*aṭṭhāṁsika*) in the middle by the bevelling of edges. The capitals on the pillars have a simple bracket on each side with a female figure in circular form similar to that in the Manchapurī cave. The end pilasters were carved with bold figures of guardians holding long spear (*kunṭadhārī rakshāpurusha*).

The ante-chamber behind the verandah consists of two cells (together 30′ × 10′) entered by four doorways. [Fig. 106]. These are adorned with arches similar to those (*Kīrtimukha*) in the Chaitya halls. The compartments between the doors of cells are sculptured with scenes in bas-reliefs representing the Vāsavadattā-Udayana story.

A special architectural feature of the Jayavijaya cave is that its upper storey is placed over the lower one and not receding as in Rāṇīgumphā. It has two cells (*dvigarbha leṇa*) and has a front verandah with two guardian figures, a male and a female, a feature found in the Western Indian caves also. The space between the arches is occupied by the rail design and a *Bodhi* tree worshipped by female figures. The bands show floral designs as in Rāṇīgumphā and dwarish Yakshas at the ends. The Svargapurī cave is similar to Jayavijaya in its upper storey being over the lower one, which is in the form of a spacious *Maṇḍapa* for congregation. There are two exquisite bas-reliefs of elephants in the two sides of the arch of the doorway.

The Vyāghragumphā is an original conception in its architectural formation. It is a great jutting boulder, carved into the shape of a tiger's open mouth with the upper jaw with nose and eyes forming the roof and the throat as a doorway leading to a single cell about 6′4″ deep by 7′ to 9′ wide. The doorjambs slope inwards slightly and the pilasters on each side have winged elephants on the capitals and vase-shaped bases with an arch surmounting them. It is quite impressive as a specimen of bold sculpture in its tiger face like the Dhauli elephant similarly carved out of a rock. The fancy of the Orissan artists was given to such capricious ideas of art-creations. There is a small inscription stating that it was the abode of an anchorite named Sabhūti who spent his days in contemplation as if in the jaws of death. [Fig. 107].

The Sarpagumphā or Serpent Cave is a single cell with a verandah having in the tympanum of the doorway the figure of a three-hooded serpent which shows that Jainas as a religion were interested in the folk cult of the Nāgas similar to that as in the Yakshas, sacred trees and *Śrī-Lakshmī*.

The Anantagumphā is the most important cave on the Khaṇḍagiri hill. It consist of an ante-chamber (24′ × 7′) with a carved verandah (26′ × 7′) in front supported on seven pillars and commanding an open terrace. [Fig. 108]. The roof of the ante-chamber is curved by a foot. Originally there were four doorways surmounted by circular arches ending in horizantal bands at the springing. The sculptured bas-reliefs in this cave are of great significance forming as it were an unusual assemblage of ancient decorative and religious motifs which put these sculptures on a par with the motifs in the Stūpas of Central India and in the rock excavations in the Western India. For example, we see here a series of battlement motifs flanking a lotus flower of conical shape, alternating with rail pattern, *triratna* design over the crest of the arch; Nāgas with interlacing tails on the tympanum of the arches, flying Vidyādharas holding baskets of flowers in their left hand and showering handfuls of flowers with the right hand, pillars surmounted by inverted lotus capital with fluted leaves similar to the Basnagar column, another segmented pillar topped by a *Pūrṇaghaṭa*, sacred tree in sequel railing worshipped by a male figure in adoration on right and a female figure holding a large garland on left with a couple of dwarf attendants holding spouted water-jar and a row of twelve flying geese holding lotuses in their beaks. In the back wall of the ante chamber are carved *svastika* and *triratna* motifs. Another bas-relief shows the goddess Śrī-Lakshmī standing on a lotus and two elephants standing likewise on lotuses are pouring water on her ; a religious motif found all over India from the time of the Ṛigveda as described in the *Śrī-Sūkta* and venerated amongst the Jainas, Buddhists and Brāhmaṇas alike. (Fig. 109). It was an ancient cult named *Śrī-Maha*. Its presence in the earliest Orissan art of the 2nd century B.C. is a pointer how Orissa shared in the cultural legacy of the country as a whole. Another significant representation is that of Sūrya, the Sun-god riding in his chariot drawn by four horses, with his two wives, much as at Bodhgaya

The pilasters by the side of the doorways are rather of an exceptional class showing the originality and the vast aesthetic resources of the artists of Kaliṅga. The shafts spring from a well formed *Pūrṇaghaṭa* covered with leaf decoration. The *Pūrṇaghaṭa* is placed on a pedestal of overlapping slab. The middle protion of the shaft has its sharp edges chamfered (*aṭṭhāṁsika thaba*) with the upper and lower portions square in section. The capital consists of addorsed animals. The surface is decorated with a *Śrī-vṛiksha* motif consisting of bulbous portions enclosing lotus

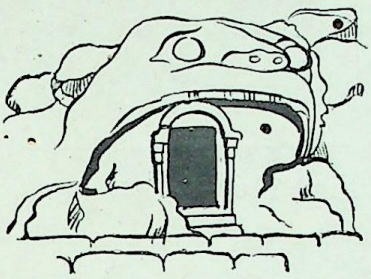


Fig. 107

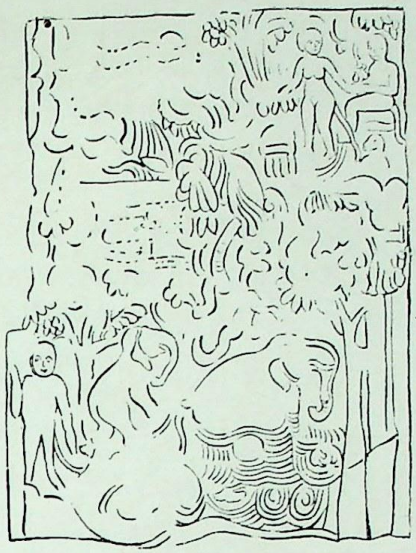


Fig. 103-104

Fig. 105

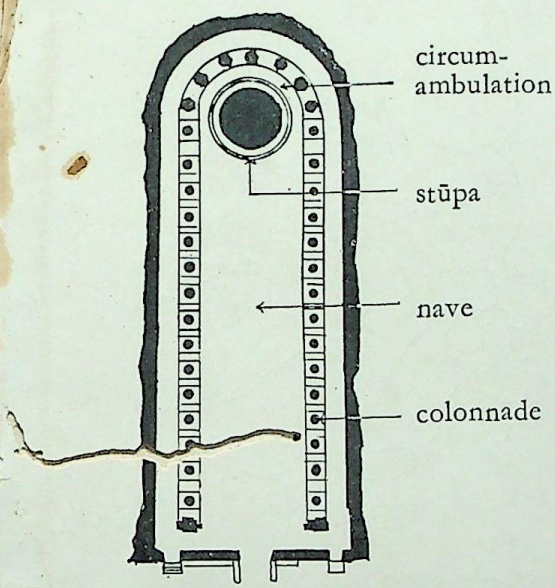


Fig. 110

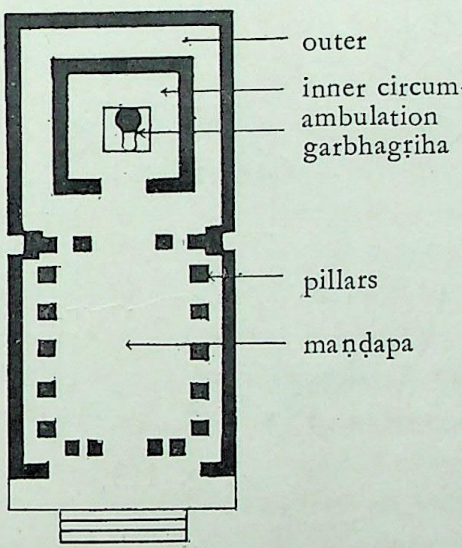


Fig. 112

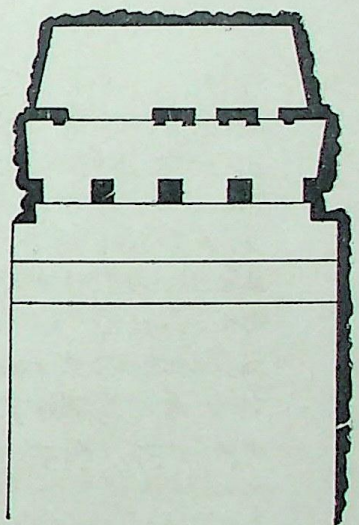


Fig. 108

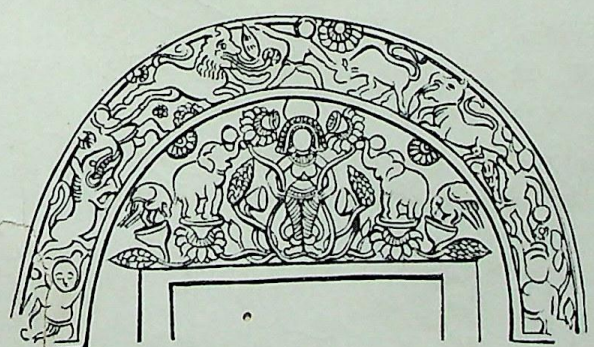


Fig. 109

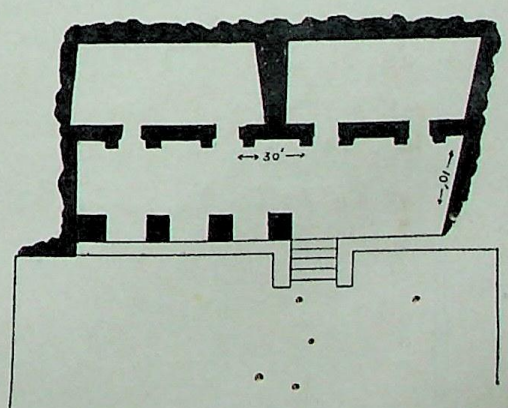


Fig. 106

PLATE XXXIV

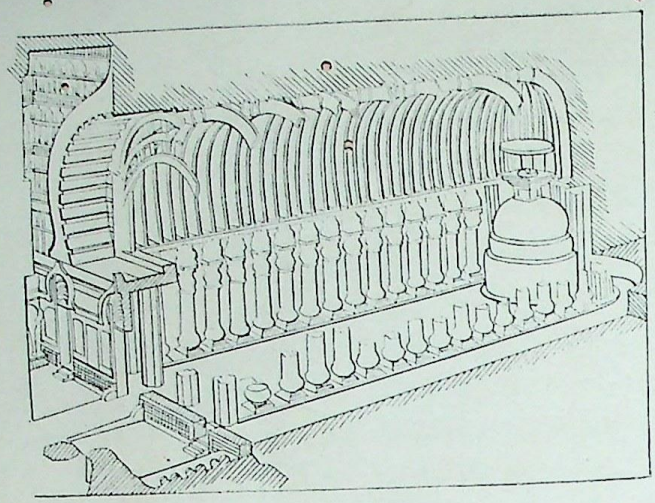


Fig. 111

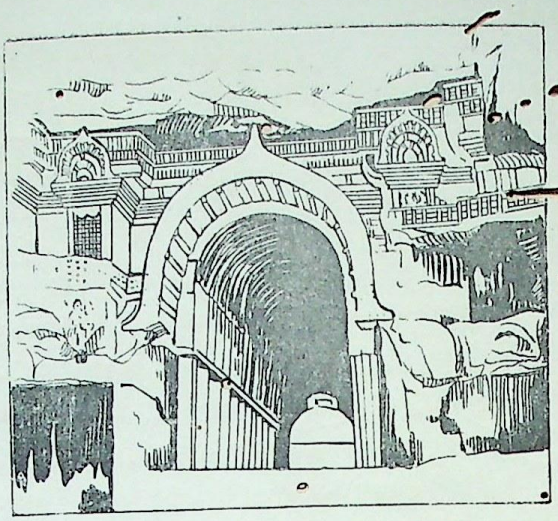


Fig. 116

Fig. 115

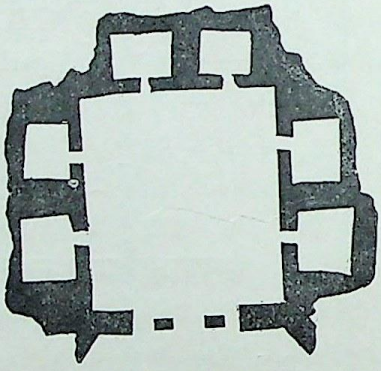


Fig. 113

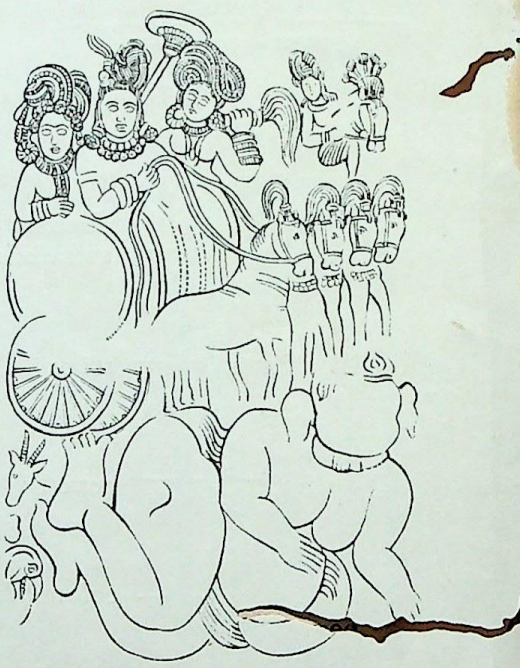


Fig. 114

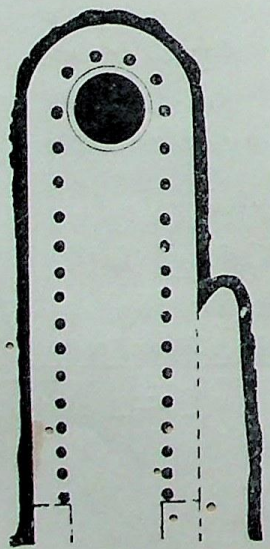


Fig. 117

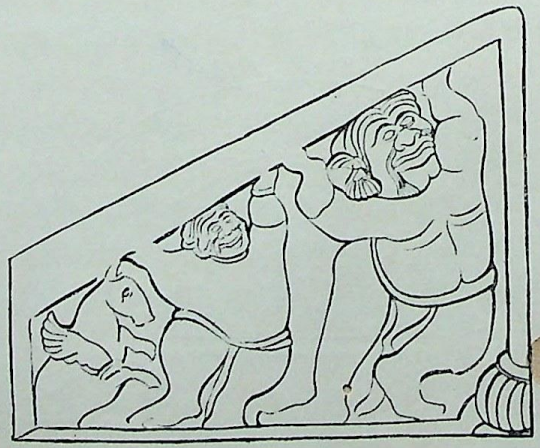


Fig. 118 a

flowers and beautified with two medallions above and below. The complete motif may be identified as an interwoven lotus garland (*Pushkarasraj* [1]) which is mentioned in Vedic literature and which seems to have symbolised the series of five lotus centres in the body.

The above caves in Orissa form part of a countrywide art movement in the Śuṅga period ranging from Saurāshṭra to Kaliṅga as its two principal peripheries and the movements of Bharhut and Sanchi as its heart. The Śuṅga period was an age of intense art creativity of which remains have been found at Nagarī near Chittore in the form of the Nārāyaṇa-vāṭaka with its stupendous stone railing; at Mathura the Mahāsthāna shrines of Bhagavān Vāsudeva erected in the time of Śoḍāsha; at Besnagar in the form of the Heliodoros column; at Ajanta in the Chaitya Halls Nos. 9 and 10 with paintings; at Bhājā with sculptures; at Bharhut, Sanchi and Bodhgaya with Stūpas, gateways and railings and at Kumārīparvata in Orissa with rock-cut excavations as described above and also in distant Amaravati in Andhra where the earliest movement of Stūpa building began about the 2nd century B. C.

The sculptures, paintings and the architectural forms of Śuṅga art show a complete mastery of the earliest religious traditions and folk cults and their integration to a new movement of exceptional richness and dynamism. In addition to the three art forms mentioned above there were numerous centres of terracotta manufacture in the Śuṅga age at Mathura, Ahichchhatra, Bairāṭ, Kauśāmbī, Vārāṇasī, Pāṭaliputra and Chandraketugarḥ (24 parganas, Bengal) of which a fuller study gives proof of wide art consciousness cultivated in the form of a broad-based æsthetic culture all over North India and the Deccan.

1. *Aśvinau Pushkarasrajau*, RV. 10. 184. 2.

CHAPTER IX

9(b). BUDDHIST ROCK-CUT ARCHITECTURE

HINAYĀNA CAVES: Aśoka had initiated the rock-cut architecture in the Barābar hills of Bihar. They are styled as *Kubhā* in the epigraphs and are of a very simple and primitive type without any pillars as mentioned earlier. This movement was continued by his grandson Daśaratha who had caves excavated in the Nāgārjunī hills and made them over to the Ājīvika monks to be used as dwelling during rains (*Varshā-nisīdiyā*). Even during Aśoka's time Buddhism had reached Western India. Two groups of rock-cut caves are found there clustered round Aśoka's fourteen Rock-edicts, viz. at Junagadh or the foot of the ancient Raivataka hills in Saurāshṭra, and the other in the vicinity of Sopara, where also a version of the Rock-edicts has been found. At Junagadh in the centre of Saurāshṭra, Talāja in the east and Sān in the south of the peninsula, which are main centres, there are about hundred and forty caves in the form either of a single cell or a series of cells (*apavaraka*), opening into a verandah (*mukha*). None of these is truly a *Chaitya* cave for there are no *Chaitya* or *Stūpa* in any one of them except a single Stūpa at Talāja and another at Sān.

The other nucleus of this great architectural movement was at Śūrpāraka (modern Sopara near Bombay) which was the biggest seaport and emporium of trade on the western sea coast or what was then known as the Śoṇāparānta country. Its rich merchants became patrons of Buddhism and dedicated their wealth on rock excavations to serve as *Chaitya* halls and monasteries for the dwelling of monks. There is a tradition preserved in the *Divyāvadāna* of the sea merchant Pūrṇa that he had become a disciple of the Buddha and being the friend of the king of the place, persuaded him to extend an invitation to the Buddha to come to Śūrpāraka which he accepted. The Buddha may not have himself visited the Koṅkaṇa country but there seems to be some truth in the tradition that the Śoṇāparānta being a turbulent country found a place in the mind of Aśoka. The famous seaport was chosen as a site for his Fourteen Rock-edicts and it appears that since that time rock excavations commenced in this locality which gradually took the form of a widespread movement which later on extended within a radius of two hundred miles and counted about twelve hundred excavations.

A cave in the hill was originally called *kubhā* or *guhā* or *ghara*, all three terms being found in the inscriptions. A cell was known as *apavaraka* (Pkt. *ovaraka, ovavaraka*) or *gharbha* (*gabha, gabbha*). The excavation work was known *Selakamma* and the master-stone masons as *Sela-vaḍḍhaki*. The master-architects were also known as

Mahāsilā-kammāntika (*Mahāśilā-karmāntika*) or *Mahā-rūpakāraka*. The work of stone carving of figure sculptures was *Sela-rūpa-kamma* (*Śaila-rūpa-karma*). The cutting of living rock was the main item of work in this kind of architecture and therefore a rock-excavation, mainly a *Chaitya* hall, began to be called *Kīrti* from the root *Kṛi* -to excavate, and the large opening now known as *Chaitya* -window was known in ancient times as *Kīrtimukha*, literally an opening to the *Kīrti* or excavated cave-hall. The pillar in front of the cave became known as *Kīrtistambha* (also *Chaitya-skambha*). We actually have freestanding lofty pillars in front of the *Chaitya*-hall at Karle and Kanheri. The cutting or scooping of the rock commenced with the boring into the façade of the intended *Sela-ghara*. The façade (*gharmukha*) consisted of two parts, a large opening above, now called *Chaitya* window, and a lower solid screen pierced by three doors, one in the centre to give access to the central *maṇḍapa* or *nave* (*nābhi*) and the two side ones to the two aisles (*pradakshiṇāpatha*). As the work proceeded the opening was widened and the debris from inside was thrown outside through that opening. The hollowed out *maṇḍapa* of the interior was literally given the name of *Kīrti* and the big opening with which the cuttting commenced *Kīrtimukha*, which also served the purpose of admitting light and air. Such cave excavations are also mentioned as *leṇa* (Sans : *Layaṇa*). They were either monastery (*Vihāra*) or *Chaitya* halls. The latter consisted of a round apse containing the solid stone *Stūpa* or *Chaitya*, a main hall supported on pillars and on its two sides an aisle or path of circumambulation (*Pradakshiṇāpatha*). This passage was separated from the central hall by a row of pillars on which the vaulted roof of the whole excavation was supported. [Fig. 110]. A problem to be solved for these monastic establishments was the supply of water. For this water was trained to descend from the high hill top in front of the cells (*garbha-dvāra*) and stored there in a deep water cistern (*Pānīya-poḍhi*, *Pānīya Bhājana* or *Pānīya-ghara*), as found in the form of an elaborate system of inter-connected canals, aqueducts (*Paṇāḍī*) at Kanheri.

Of the several architectural features in the rock excavations the vaulted roof may be said to be very remarkable in its conception. It was re-inforced by strong solid large-sized wooden-ribs inserted in the rock on the two sides. This was a feature borrowed from the original wooden buildings, although in the rock excavation its functional purpose no longer existed and it remained merely as a decoration over which much time, labour and money must have been spent. [Fig. 111]. Similar was the case with the wooden screen provided on the ground floor and the circular framework of screens of the *Chaitya* windows which have remained in some caves and disapeared in others. The Buddhist railing as seen in the Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi had no place in the architecture of the *Chaitya* hall, but it seems to have had such a fascination on the minds of the stone masons that they employed it profusely as a decorative motif on the façades or walls of the verandah.

The rock-cut excavation took the form of a most vigorous movement ever witnessed in the field of Indian art. This particular form of architecture continued for a very long time from the third century B. C. throughout first millennium A. D. The rock-cut architecture resolves itself into two phases, the earlier of Hīnayāna phase, lasting until the second century A.D., then there is a gap of about three centuries but it revives again about the sixth century A.D., after which it continues for several centuries with great vigour and attained its richest and most varied form. This latter phase was inspired by the Mahāyāna movement in Buddhism.

Altogether there were not less than twelve hundred distinct excavations, distributed in at least fifty groups of caves in India proper. Some of these groups contain as many as hundred distinct caves e.g. caves at Junnar (48 miles from Poona). Of these about nine hundred are Budhhist and the remining three hundred are of Jaina and Brahmanical origin.

They are of two classes; 1. Temples or *Chaitya* halls and 2. Monasteries. Of the *Chaitya* halls not more than twenty to thirty are known to exist. The rest all monasteries.

CHAITYA HALLS: The Chaitya halls are all cut in rocks with the exception of the structural Chaitya halls at Sanchi, Ter in Nalla Durge district, Hyderabad and a third one at Chezerla in the Krishna district.

There are eight important Chaitya halls excavated in the Hīnayāna period (200 B.C. to 200 A.D.) viz., Bhaja, Kondane, Pītalkhorā, Ajanta (Cave 10), Bedsa, Ajanta (Cave 9), Nasik and Karle. These were most probably excavated in the order named. The first four in 2nd century B.C. and remainder in 1st century B.C.

A Chaitya hall is really a temple of the Buddhist religion, both in form and use. It is very much similar to a Christian Church consisting of a nave, apse, and aisle. The aisle is separated from the nave by a row of pillars. The apse contains the object of worship, which is almost invariably a solid *Stūpa*. The whole is excavated in the living rock or built of wood and brick (if structural). Instead of tracing its similarity, it would be more relevant to compare a Chaitya hall with the several parts of a Hindu temple. The apse, which is at the extreme end of the Chaitya hall, corresponds to the *garbhagriha* of a temple exactly placed in a similar position; the nave corresponds to a *maṇḍapa* and the aisle on the two sides and round the apse to the *pradakshiṇāpatha* of a Brahmanical temple. Of course, with the lapse of time, there was increasing elaboration of the temple architecture, but the basic elements were exactly those comprised in a Chaitya hall. [Figs. 110, 112]. Except at Bhaja, there is very little sculpture carved in the earliest Vihāras and Chaitya halls.

VIHĀRA: The other architectural formation in rock-cut style was the monastery for the accommodation of the monks, which was known as the *Vihāra.* A typical Vihāra consisted of a square central hall, entered by a doorway, in front of which was a verandah or a porch. The central hall was surrounded on two or three sides by square cells, each serving as the abode of a monk. [Fig. 113].

A Vihāra is a residence or dwelling of a monk. Such a dwelling for one monk would consist of a single cell. A group of such apartments for a community of monks (*Bhikkhu Saṅgha*) was called *Saṅghārāma* or Monastery. The word Vihāra was used originally to designate a cell, but later a full monastic establishment; and the extended application is now generally understood by the term Vihāra.

In the case of the Vihāras, we depend entirely on rock-cut examples, since the earliest structural examples, which must have existed at one time, have now disappeard. Only rock-cut examples of the earliest Vihāra have survived. In the case of the early Vihāras, co-eval in time with the Chaitya halls, the architectural plans were simple. Later on, in the Mahāyāna, from about 2nd century A. D. onwards, the Vihāras became important structures. In the accounts of Yuan Chwang, elaborate *Saṅghārāmas* are mentioned, sometimes having as many as five stories, super-imposed one over the other in a pyramidal form; the lower-most comprising five hundred cells and each storey diminishing by hundred. The Hīnayāna monasteries were designed as copies in the rock of the structural building used as the residence of monks. The earlier or the Hīnayāna type has the following distinct features:—

(1) In the early monasteries, there was a large squared central hall, uninterrupted by any pillars or colonnades. This hall served as the assembly room for the monks.

(2) The cells opening out from the central hall always contained stone beds also formed in the rock.

(3) The cells were small, on an average 9 ft. square; owing to the situation of the stone beds, in such small cells, the doorway was not in the centre but to one side of the outer wall.

As examples of existing monasteries we have several groups; viz. (i) the Vihāra Caves in Magadha in Barabar hills; (ii) the Vihāra Caves at Orissa in Udaigiri and Khaṇḍagiri hills, which were excavated for Jaina monks; (iii) Vihāra Caves in Western India at Nasik, Ajanta, Bhaja and other places, mostly attached to the Chaitya halls as at Bedsa, Pittalkhora, Kondane, Karle and Junnar. One of the oldest Vihāras is that attached to the Chaitya at Bhaja. It is five-celled (*pañcha-garbha*), three of which have single stone-beds and one is double-bedded. The central

hall, is 33ft. in length with two long stone benches at either ends. At present this hall is open in front but originally it might have been closed by a wooden screen like the Chaitya hall by its side. Both the Monastery and the Chaitya hall belong to early 2nd century B. C. Both are indeed part of one design. The conjoined Chaitya and Vihāra occurs only at Bhaja, or at a very late date at Dhamnar. The Vihāra and Chaitya Caves at Bedsa are placed a very little apart from each other. The exceptional thing about the Bedsa Vihāra is that it is apsidal in form like the Chaitya. Perhaps there architects making their first experiments of excavating a rock for the purpose of a Vihāra thought that it should resemble a Chaitya.

The Chaitya halls were apsidal at the extreme end. The roof of the Chaitya hall was barrel-shaped or vaulted (*gajaprishṭhākṛiti*, or *ḍholākāra*), and each one of them had a facet or entrance marked by a Chaitya window as the constant feature.

The style of architecture employed in rock-cut Vihāras and Chaitya halls seems to have been copied from existing sculptural originals on timber, the general shape of such wooden building as well as every details even to the joints and fastenings of the carpentry constructions being exactly imitated in the natural rock. In some cases the rock work is partly supplemented by wooden construction attached to its surfaces. These wooden additions are to be seen on both the exterior and interior of the rock-cut works. The workmen employed would not have been beginners, for the actual workmanship is incredibly precise and they show remarkable manipulative skill in fashioning these architectural forms in the rock. The earliest examples are the most perfectly aligned, planned and wrought with every line mathematically straight and every angle true. The workmen did their job with such delicacy and skill as not to crack or splinter the rock in any place ; and also to finish its surface pleasingly. The rough quarrying and the fine chiselling and carving were done by the same workmen. They were quarrymen and sculptor combined. Their tools consisted of simple iron chisel being 1/4″ in width for fine work and pointed pickaxe for the first quarrying in the rock.

The Western Chaitya Halls and Vihāras :

About nine hundred of these excavations are found in the Bombay Presidency within a radius of 200 miles of Nasik as its centre. The oldest of these caves are situated at Bhaja, four miles south of the great Karle caves in the Bhor Ghat.

Bhājā

The old Vihāra at Bhājā is the earliest, viz. 2nd century B. C. (circa 175 B. C.) in the beginning of the Śuṅga period. At Bhaja there are three

monuments: 1. A Vihāra or monastery; 2. A group of 14 rock-cut Stūpas; and 3. A large excavated Chaitya hall.

THE VIHĀRA: The Bhājā Vihāra has the following plan:

There is an outer verandah (17½′ in length by 7′ wide at the east end and 9½′ at the west) separated by a wall with two doorways and a barred window; inside it is an inner hall (16′ × 16′7″) surrounded by excavated cells for the residence of monks, each having a stone bed. In the case of Bhājā Vihāra, the sculpture is most remarkable, almost unique in relief. These include a frieze, five figures in niches holding arms and two reliefs. The guardian figures are colossal, muscular and of heavy build, like the ancient Yaksha statues. They are extremely richly ornamented, wearing elaborate turbans, ear-pendents, torque and necklaces, armlets and profuse pearl-wristlets. In the east end of the verandah is a pillar and pilaster with inverted lotus capitals and surmounting capitals having human female busts on bovine bodies with male companions (*puṅgava-puṅgavī*), a motif which corresponds to the centaurs or *kinnara* seen elsewhere in Indian art. The jambs of the cell doorways slope inwards and the walls above and between them are ornamented with the Chaitya window pattern. The two reliefs, however, are more important.

They are carved on the right and left sides of the cell-doorways at the east end of the verandah. On the left side, we see a royal personage, driving in a chariot with four horses, and accompanied by two women, holding a *chhatra* and the other a *chāmara* which are the marks of royalty. The wheels of the chariot move over the bodies of the very grossly proportioned nude demons. This figure was so far identified as the representation of Sūrya. [Fig. 114].

The relief on the right side shows a royal figure with an attendant seated behind carrying a standard (*dhvaja*) and both riding on an enormous elephant, striding to left and upholding an uprooted tree in its raised trunk. The remainder of the landscape depicts a couple of trees within railing and groups of *mithuna* pairs seated enjoying music and dance. This upper figure was identified as Indra, riding on his elephant Airāvata. The various scenes in the landscape below, although explained by Coomaraswamy, have, as stated by him, no principal connection with Indra. Moreover, the two scenes of Sūrya and Indra carved on the two doorways of the cell have no obvious inter-relation. [Fig. 115].

The fact is that the two reliefs do not represent either Sūrya or Indra. They, on the other hand, depict the visit of King Māndhātā to the Uttarakuru country. In the left-side-scene of the so-called Sūrya image, the principal figure is King Māndhātā himself, distinguished by the two royal emblems. As the story in the *Divyāvadāna*

states, the wheels of his chariot moved over the bodies of the demons, who obstructed his ways (*asurāṇām upari vaihāyasaṁ ratho gachchhati*).

The demons were vanquished, broken and rendered prostrate by King Māndhātā (*Jitā bhagnāḥ parājitāḥ parāprishṭhīkritā asurāḥ*) by his religious merits (*Puṇyavipākamaheśākhyo'yaṁ sattvaḥ*).

(*Div.* p. 223, Cowell's Ed.)

In the second relief on the right, we see King Māndhātā actually entering the garden city of the Uttarakuru country, after overcoming the fivefold defences (*pañcharakshā*). According to the mythical tradition as recorded in the *Mahāvāṇija Jātakas* and in the *Mahābhārata* (Bhīshma Parva), the land of Uttarakuru is an idyllic region where men and women live in eternal youth and happiness with their wants supplied by the wish-fulfilling *Kalpavriksha* tree producing costly clothes, ornaments, food and drinks and *mithuna* pairs. Here we actually have a representation of these *Kalpavrikshas*; what Coomaraswamy takes as figures suspended for human sacrifice actually represents the *mithuna* pairs being born from the *Kalpavrikshas*. The tree in the centre at the bottom is shown with ornaments suspended from its branches (*ābharaṇa-vriksha*). The same type has been seen in the Bharhut meanders. The men and women seated in pairs on the proper right side of the relief and witnessing dance actually represent the happy inmates of the Uttarakuru land (*Devo vā Devakanyā vā veṇuvallarisughoshakā krīḍanti ramante*).

In the foreground is a tree in railing with many kinds of clothes suspended from it (*Kalpa-dūshya vrikshāḥ, Div.* p. 221). Such a representation had both a religious and decorative purpose (*ārakshaṇārtham atyārthaṁ śobhaṇārthaṁ cha*).

Although the Uttarakuru scenes are depicted at Bharhut, Sanchi and Bodh-gaya also, but here at Bhaja we find a fullfledged and emphatic representation of the conception of a *Chakravartī* King bringing under his royal glory even Sudarśana, the capital city of Uttarakuru and this sovereign king was idealised as Māndhātā who was equal to Indra himself.

The front portion of the Bhaja Vihāra had an important architectural feature, viz. a front wooden screen with doorways; its upper portion being occupied by rail design, similar to the frontage of the Chaitya hall by its side.

CHAITYA GHARA—The Chaitya hall at Bhājā is still more important and offers notable architectural features. It is 55′ long and 26′ across, the side aisles being 2½′ wide. The pillars in the hall are 11′ high and have an inward slope of 5″ being tilted from their plumb line. The vault is 29′ high from the floor level and is a fine piece of work being still supported on massive wooden ribs in parallel rows. The Stūpa of solid rock is in two portions, viz. a cylindrical base topped by an elongated dome

which once had a wooden railing finial (*harmikā*). A notable feature from the architectural point of view was the rock and timber combination in the front which has now mostly gone. It consisted of a heavy wooden screen in two storeys, the lower one supported on four pillars with a back screen pierced by three doorways, one in the centre and two on the sides and in between them a beautiful rail design. Similar wooden screens also closed other Chaitya halls of this class as at Kondane, Pītalkhorā, Cave No. 10 of Ajanta. In other examples the screen was in stone and consequently remained, but in those instances, where it was originally in wood it has disappeared, though the holes to receive its posts and the mortice by which it was attached to the walls are still there.

The ogee fronton (*kīrtimukha*) was covered with wooden ornaments which have disappeared; though the pinholes remain by which they were fastened to these stones. The frame work or truss that filled the upper parts of the great front opening no longer exists, but what its appearance was may be judged of by the numerous representations of itself with which it is covered or from the representations of a Chaitya façade from the contemporary rail at Bodhgaya, and several other representations of a similar nature at Bharhut, depicting the *gharamukha-Pañjara*. The only existing example of this wooden screen is that at Karle, but the innumerable small repetitions of it, not only here, but in all these caves, show not only its form but how universal its employment was. [Fig. 116]

There is no doubt that both the Chaitya hall and Vihāra at Bhaja had their prototypes in wooden constructions and everything in fact that could be made in wood remained in wood, and only the constructive parts necessary for stability were executed in the rock. The inward sloping of the pillars was a necessary requisite to resist the thrust of the circular roof in the wooden building, but it was hardly appropriate in stone construction or excavation. The door-jambs also are similarly sloping. In course of time the architects discovered that a cutting of rock to give place to a wooden screen was sheer waste of time and labour so that in course of time three developments took place, viz. a retention of the stone screen with openings for doorways, the vertical position of the pillars of the hall and the door-jambs also being made parallel instead of being tilted.

There is very litttle figure sculpture in this Chaitya hall, excepting five emblems on the pillars of the interior, viz. triratna, nandipada, śrīvatsa, Chakra, four triratnas round a central head and a lotus.

BHAJA STŪPAS: At a short distance from the Chaitya hall along the face of the scarp is a group of fourteen monolithic Stūpas of various sizes. All of them have the Buddhist rail pattern cut round the upper margin of the drum. Five under

the overhanging rock vary in diameter from 4 ft. 8 in. to 6 ft. 3 in. and the front two have the square box only on the dome, as in the cave, and without the cornice, while the three behind have also the cornice: that upon the largest being connected with the roofs by the stone shaft of the *Chhatra* or umbrella, whilst the other two had been provided with wooden shafts. Of the nine in front, the first from the north has a handsome capital 3 ft. 8 in. high, very elaborately carved; most of them others have been broken. One or more had only the box form without the abacus, and on four of them are holes on the top as if for relics. The names of the Theras inscribed over them are still legible.

KONDĀNE

VIHĀRA AND CHAITYA HALL:

Ten miles north of Karle are the Kondāne Vihāra and Chaitya hall. The Vihāra is of one storey. It presents a rare type of architecture in Vihāra excavation having a central hall supported on pillars. The exterior consisted of a pillared portico on which a massive cornice is projecting corresponding to an entablature (*bhāra-paṭṭa*) which is in every detail a true copy of an wooden original. In the portico (*mukha-maṇḍapa*) is a screen wall with three square openings forming the doorway (*dvāra*) and a window on each side. The hall in the interior measuring 23 ft. × 29 ft. has a row of pillars and cells opening into it on the three sides. The pillars support a vaulted roof with ribbed beams as usually found in the Chaitya halls which have been faithfully borrowed from wooden prototypes. On one side of the portico a motif of the façade of a Chaitya hall (*gharamukha*) is carved which furnishes all the details of the architecture generally associated with the Chaitya hall. The Kondane Chaitya hall possessed a façade of the same type as at Bhājā with the pillared protico but with its upright posts partly excavated in rock and partly made of wood which shows a later development. The interior *maṇḍapa* and *garbhagriha* together measured 66 ft. in length and 26 ft. 6 in. across being slightly larger than the Chaitya hall at Bhājā. Its height is over 28 ft. [Fig. 117].

In the series of Hīnayāna excavations those at Kondāne come immediately after Bhājā.

PĪTALKHORĀ

The ancient name was Pītaṅgalya. There is a group of 13 caves at this site on two sides of a hilly ravine, nine in one face of the scarp and four on the other. They are excavated on the Satamala range on the northern fringe of Aurangabad in east Kandesh on the road connecting Aurangabad with Chalisgaon. As the crow flies, the caves lie 50 miles to the west-south-west of Ajanta and 23 miles to the north-west of Ellora. The caves lay on an ancient caravan route (*Sātthavāha-patha*). Caravans

from the Govardhana countries (Nasik region) and from Śūrpāraka crossed the Indhyādri hill close to where these caves are situated in order to reach their destination, Pratishṭhāna, the capital of the Sātavāhanas and a great commercial centre a few centuries before and after the Christian epoch. The route almost followed the present-day Chalisgaon Aurangabad-Paithan road ; Ellora which the later Buddhists chose as the site for their rock-cut monasteries, was also on the route.

The *Mahāmāyūrī* Buddhist Texts mention the Yaksha Śaṅkarin at Pītaṅgalya, Khaṇḍaka at Pratishṭhāna, Sundara at Nāsikya and Asaṅga at Bharukachchha which nearly supply a perimeter on this highly important region in which trade and commerce accompanied with religious activity flourished at their best. The architectural activity at Pitalkhora began in 2nd century B. C. and of that period we have a Vihāra and a Chaitya hall. The place was deserted after about a couple of centuries and then renovated with sculptures in the Vihāra and Buddhist paintings in the Chaitya hall similar to those in the Ajanta caves. Thus Pītalkhorā very naturally shared in the two phases of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna architectural and art activity in northern Deccan as were witnessed at Ajanta also.

The Vihāras had wooden screens with mortice holes in the rock for the uprights and excavated cells in the interior, each cell being furnished with a bed.

Cave 3 is a Chaitya hall, 35 ft. wide and 86 ft. long with an apsidal end. Originally there were in all 37 octagonal (*aṭṭāṁsika thabha*) rock-cut pillars separating the aisle from the hall of which only twelve now stand in tact in their original form, with their paintings of about the fifth century and two early inscriptions of the time when the cave was excavated, recording the gift of citizens from Pratishṭhāna. All the pillars have an inward inclination like those at Bhājā. The aisles are 4 ft. 11 in. wide and have stone ribs in the ceiling but the vaulted roof of the nave or main *maṇḍapa* was once provided with wooden ribs which have now disappeared leaving traces behind of their positions. The square spaces between the wooden ribs were once decorated with painting on plaster, of which a few traces of panels with lotuses exist. The other paintings surviving on the walls and pillars of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures deserve to be studied separately as examples of Mahāyāna phase during Vākāṭaka time.

The circumference of the Stūpa at the base is 36 ft. and it is wanting in its dome portion which seems to have been of masonry. Crystal reliquaries were discovered within the drum of the Stūpa in oblong sockets specially chiselled for the purpose, and covered with plugged stones. This was a practice also observed at Bhājā but there the crystal reliquaries which are such a feature at Pitalkhora were wanting.

Another feature is a flight of eleven steps. On each side of them on the rock surface is a very vigorous sculptured panel in low relief depicting a prancing winged horse and two corpulent Yakshas with upraised hands, goggle eyes, thick lips and cloven ears, wearing a cluster of bored rings. These Yaksha figures bear a family-resemblance to the Atlante dwarfs placed in similar positions at Sanchi and Karle. They seem to have been styled as *Kiṅkaras* or *Guhyakas* and as supporting the assembly hall of Vaiśravaṇa to produce an effect of its flooting in the sky (Sabhā Parva, 10. 33, 25 where they are mentioned as Rākshasas with tipped ears (*śukti-karṇa*), *ghora* and *mahā-kāya*). [Fig 118].

Cave 4 was the magnificent Vihāra once adorned with a sculptured façade which once had at its top Chaitya window ornamentation. Of what remains we have a row of six Chaitya windows with the interior decorated with the recessed window pattern and animal figures between the semi-circular rock-cut Vedikā pattern. Below this is the sculpture of a *mithuna*. On the pilasters of the back cells of this cave there are sculptures and on the pillars are winged sphinx and animal capital and also decorations on the Chaitya window arches over the doorway of the cells. There are seven cells in the interior of the hall and a verandah on the out side which has figures of Dvārapāla guardians on the two sides of a very ornate doorway and its high plinth is decorated with a row of beautiful elephant figures half projecting forward with the mahāut standing in front. The entrance doorway (5 ft 4 in. × 2 ft 6 in.) has its jambs ornamented with beautiful designs of half-lotuses and the *triratna*. On the two sides are two figures of Dvārapālas in dignified pose wearing a *dhotī*, a close fitting tunic and a heavy turban, and ponderous ear-pendants. They hold a javelin in one hand and a shield in the other which are oblong in shape. Both these sculptures are remarkable for their very realistic modelling and vigorous musculature of their bodies as well as the smiling expression of the face which is a rare feature of such figures in early art. Over the head of each Dvārapāla is an elephant in profile. Set within these two elephants and above the doorway was an oblong panel of Gaja-Lakshmī (now fallen from its original position) seated on a lotus and holding in two hands raised lotus stalks and being bathed by two elephants holding inverted water-jars ; the whole being a delightful representation of this motif in early art. [Fig. 119].

Beyond the elephants on the right side is an almost life-size sculpture of a horse with a figure of a male in front and a chowrie-bearer behind. This unique sculpture, with an inscribed record giving the name of the donor over it was very likely installed later during the second phase of restoration as a prop to the overhanging rock. This seems to be the scene of *Mahābhinishkramaṇa*.

There are several short epigraphs in this cave in the script of 2nd century B. C.

Caves 5 to 9 are all Vihāras, the ninth being of large size with a façade supported on four pillars and two pilasters leading into a portico (26 ft × 5 ft 9 in.) with a central doorway. Inside the *maṇḍapa* are cells alround with a fine berm with the Vedikā pattern on the architrave running alround the wall-surface above the cell dome. [Fig. 120].

In group two, Cave 10 was a Chaitya hall with vaulted roof and a Stūpa in the apsidal portion and similar were caves 11, 12 and 13. The vaulted ceiling of Chaitya hall in Cave 12 has rock-cut ribs intercepted by rock-cut rafters which thus produce eight compartments between each two ribs, the ribs themselves projecting 7 in. from their surface. Cave 13 also is a Chaitya hall. The apsidal hall is 27 ft 10 in. deep, 15 ft wide and 15 ft high. There are two rows of pillars in the hall going round the Stūpa in apsidal end, thus dividing the hall into a central nave and side aisle, respectively 7 ft and 1 ft 11 in. wide. There were ten pillars in two rows in the front portion and four more in the apsidal end ; all of them are, however, decayed and have only their stems in tact. The vaulted roof over the nave and the Stūpa have stone ribs and rafters of the same type as in Cave 12.

Thus, from the point of view of art we find the Pitalkhora caves sharing in full all the architectural features of Vihāra and Chaitya hall rock-excavation marking the early Hīnayāna phase with Vedikā pattern portico on pillars, inclining jambs, vaulted roofing with stone and wooden ribs and the general plan of the nave, apse and aisle. The evidence about sculpture is quite full showing sculptured figures of great size and beauty in which Dvārapālas, animal figures of horses and elephants, royal couples with attendants, Śrī-Lakshmī, Nāgarāja, Atlante dwarfs, musicians, Mithunas, etc. have been found.

Near the cistern of Cave 7 was found a hoard of pottery including the well known sprouted sprinkler resembling the Roman and other red wares of Western Asia and indigenous imitations thereof in cruder fabric and with crackled red slip.[1]

AJANTA (AJIṆṬHĀ)

The rock excavations at Ajanta are the most famous of all the caves and represent a great movement in architecture, sculpture and painting extending from 2nd century B. C. to 7th century A. D., and comprising within their fold both the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna phases. Of the 29 caves there are only four Chaitya halls and the rest are Vihāras. The Chaitya hall in cave 10 is the oldest excavation at Ajanta which may be assigded to the 2nd century B. C. It is

1. M. N. Deshpande : 'Rock-cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan', pp. 56-93. (*Ancient India* No. 15).

96′ 6″ in depth by 41′ 3″ in width internally and 36′ in height. The nave (*maṇḍapa*) is separated from (*pradakshiṇāpatha*) by a range of 59 plain octagonal shafts, very slightly inclined inwards but without capitals or bases. The ribs in the apse portion radiate from the pillars. The vault of the nave was adorned with wooden ribs, the mortices for which are still there and their marks can still be traced in the roof but the wood itself is gone. The architectural execution indicates great mastery and boldness on the part of those who excavated the Chaitya hall in the bowels of the mountain and finished it to all the ornamental details with the utmost care. The Stūpa in the apse is of an elaborate nature with the circular base in two tiers and the dome also elongated indicating a step further in the development of its shape. [Fig. 121]. Chaitya hall No. 9 is smaller than No 10 and has a façade in which no wooden attachments are found. It has in its *mukhapaṭṭa* or façade a doorway in the centre and a window on either side, each opening being protected by a projecting cornice altogether making a shallow portico. Above this is the *Saṅgīta Śālā*, the minstrels' gallery or the music hall and over it the most remarkable portion of the Chaitya hall excavation which is known as *Kīrtimukha* or the broad and lofty Chaitya window (12′ in height) opening to admit light and air into the interior of the *Chaitya Maṇḍapa*. [Fig. 122].

The spaces on the screen are carved with Vedikā design which are so realistically depicted on the façades at Bhājā, Koṇḍāne, Nasik, etc. The plan of the *maṇḍapa* is rectangular and the ceiling of the *pradakshiṇāpatha* on the two sides is flat and its pillars are perpendicular. Originally the vaulted roof was superficially supported on wooden ribs which did not serve any architectural function and so were removed. Both these Chaitya halls were profusely painted in the early style of the Śuṅga period and do not show any sculpture in the interior. Wherever there are figures of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas, they are all of a later date when the caves were renovated.

Cave Nos. 12, 13 and 8 at Ajanta are Vihāras of which 12 was the oldest being attached to Chaitya shrine No. 10, and No. 13 was added later to accommodate the growing population of the monks. No. 11 is a Mahāyāna Vihāra being added much later. The establishment must have expanded even further for which Chaitya No. 9 and Vihāra No. 8 were provided in the Hīnayāna phase. Vihāra No. 12 is single-storeyed with its façade now gone. The Central hall (38′ × 38′) is square which served as the reception room (*Upasthāna Śāla*) for the monks. It had no pillars for the internal support of the roof. Round the central hall is a horse-shoe arcading forming a beautiful frieze carried all round. The stone carvers have given remarkable proof of their refined art cutting with utmost precision all the details of ornamentation and decorative motifs.

There are four cells, on each of the inner sides and within 11 double beds and raised pillows to sleep on, are cut in stone. The cell-doors seem to have been provided with wooden shutters for which holes for pivot-hinges in the sills and lintels may still be seen. It was likely a big dormitory in which the monks assured themselves against wild animals.

Vihāra 13 seems to have started as the residence of a single monk but later on expanded in to a hall with polished walls but without pillars (14′ × 17′ × 7′). It had seven cells with stone beds as in cave 12.

Cave 8 seems to have been a natural cavern but enlarged by excavation to 32′ × 17′ × 10′. There are 2 cells at each end and 2 on each side of the ante-chamber leading to the shrine. There is a low door leading to the dark ante-chamber in which there is no image of any kind, with only a low stone-bench at the back.

The group of the 5 caves in the Ajanta cliff forms the nucleus from which the other caves radiate south-east (8) and south-west (14) which belonged to Mahāyāna phase. Amongst them 16 & 17 are Vihāras and 1 & 2 are Chaitya halls with the paintings and sculptures of the most magnificent character.

Bedsā Caves

Bedsā is ten miles south of Karle. Its group of caves shows considerable progress from wood towards lithic construction. The screen is in stone; the pillars are more upright though still sloping slightly inwards; the jambs more nearly parallel; in fact, we have nearly all the features of a well-designed Chaitya Cave.

A very remarkable feature of the portico is two large-sized pillars which have developed all those features that are associated with the free-standing columns, viz. a tall shaft and a very conspicuous animal capital as are exactly found in front of the Karle Cave and which are truly descended from the style of free-standing Aśokan pillars, but here at Bedsa the two pillars are not free-standing but incorporated in the architecture of the portico between the pilasters on either side. They serve the architectural function of supporting on their capitals very large front beam and joists of the verandah, all no doubt cut in rock after wooden prototype.

The pillars are eight-sided and inserted in vase-shaped bases, Pūrṇaghaṭa, and have on the summit inverted lotus leaves, the style and meaning of which have already been discussed in the case of Sarnath Lion Capital. What constitutes a very pleasing feature is the capital consisting of an abacus of decreasing recessed cornices and supporting on the top male and female riders on addorsed horses on one side and on elephant on the other (*haya-saṅghāṭa* and *gaja-saṅghāṭa*). Both the human and animal sculptures are of bold and free execution and display a rare quality of in-

tegrating sculpture with architecture in rather a difficult position. These capitals at Bedsa are undoubtedly works of genius artists whose workmanship both here and at Karle deserves the highest meed of praise.

In front of these pillars rough masses of rocks have been left causing a partial obstruction of their view. There is an elaborate superstructure over the pillared portico and the inside wall has a very pleasant arcading to give entrance to the nave of the Chaitya hall. The whole surface of the façade is occupied by the Vedikā pattern. The Chaitya window arches are superimposed by similar architectural features of the most pleasing design in two tiers and the whole frontage furnishes an example of rare beauty in which the art of providing a façade to the Chaitya hall is seen at its best comparable only with that at Karle.

The front surface is covered by rail decoration (*Śalākā vātāyana*) which supplies a fair test of the age of any building. It gradually becomes less and less after the Bedsa Caves and disappears wholly in the Mahāyāna phase of rock-cut caves. During the Hīnayāna phase (circa 2nd century B. C. to 2nd century A. D.) its greater or less prevalence in any building is one of the surest indications we have of the relative age of any two examples. In this cave nearly the whole ornamentation is made up of miniature rails, and repetitions of window fronts or façades. It has also a semi-circular open moulding, like basket-work (*jālaka-vātāyana*) which is only found in the very oldest caves and is evidently so unsuited for stone work that it is no wonder it was dropped very early.

The interior of the Chaitya hall measures 45½ ft. in length and 21 ft. in width. It is severely plain having octagonal pillars without bases or capitals but showing some Buddhist symbols carved on them. The vaulted roof had originally wooden ribs attached to it which were quite massive but now most of it has disappeared. The traces of fresco paintings on the pillars and Stūpa may still be seen but likely from the 2nd phase of restoration. The Vihāra adjacent to the Chaitya hall shows a perfectly rectangular form but with a circular-end rectangular inner Maṇḍapa with square cells excavated on the three sides.

Nāsik (Nāsikyā)

It was an ancient city mentioned by Patañjali as Nāsikyā and possessed a very favourable position on the Godavari to become a religious centre of repute from the earliest times and, therefore, chosen by the Buddhist community of monks for their solitary retreat and meditation.

There are seventeen excavations in all at Nasik, of which only one is Chaitya and others are all Vihāras ; six or seven being of first class nature. At one

time, the walls of Nasik monasteries were also adorned with paintings like those at Ajanta but none has survived.

The oldest Vihāra at Nasik, 2nd century B. C., is a simple square hall measuring 14 ft. each way with two square cells in three of its sides, the fourth one opening into a verandah with two octagonal pillars. Above each cell-door is a Chaitya window. This Vihāra is identical with the two oldest ones at Ajanta. There is an inscription in this cave of King Kṛishṇa of Andhra dynasty, about 170 B. C.

There are three other great Vihāras at Nasik, the oldest being of Nahapāna, the second of Gautamīputra and the third of Śrī Yajña Sātakarṇi, all three datable from 1st century B.C. to 2nd century A.D. The Nahapāna Vihāra and that of Gautamīputra are exactly similar in dimensions and in all their arrangements. They are both square halls, 40 ft. on each side, without any pillar at the centre, surrounded on the three sides with 16 cells in all. On the fourth side, viz. the front, there is a verandah supported on six pillars with a cell at each end in the case of the Nahapāna Vihāra. The pillars of the verandah of the Nahapāna Vihāra are exactly similar to those of the Chaitya hall at Karle. At Karle, we have inscriptions of the son-in-law of Nahapāna, namely Ushavadāta and his wife Dakshamitrā, who were also the donors of the two cells in the verandah of Nahapāna Vihāra.

In the Nahapāna Cave the eight-sided shaft of the pillar is inserted at the bottom in a *pūrṇa-kumbha* placed on a four-tiered basement and on the top covered by an inverted *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* similarly resting in a reverse position on a tiered abacus supporting pairs of addorsed bulls (*vṛisha-saṅghāṭa*) over whom is an impressive entablature covered by a parapet with embrasures and superimposed rail design.

The pillars in Gautamīputra cave are of much greater richness standing inside a railing of lotus design (*padmavara-vedikā*) with upright and coss-bars all covered with medallions like those found in the Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā, Mathura. The top of the 8-sided pillar is covered by an unmistakable inverted jar over which is an abacus supporting addorsed lions (*Siṁha-saṅghāṭa*) and over their heads an entablature elaborately carved showing parapet with embrasures and then a row of spirited animals and finally, several rows of lotus medallions.

The great Vihāra of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi is the most important; its hall being 61 ft. X 37½ ft. at the outer end, increasing to 44ft. at the inner end having eight cells on each side. Originally, the hall was only 40 ft. in length, but extended at a later period to 61 ft. in length. Its most marked peculiarity is that it has a sanctuary at its inner end with two richly carved pillars in front and a colossal figure of seated Buddha within the sanctuary, together with standing attendants and other

figures of dwarfs, etc. usually found in later Mahāyāna-shrines. There is an inscription stating that the Vihāra was completed by Vāsu, wife of the commander-in-chief of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi, in the 7th year of reign after many years of its original excavation by some ascetics. This refers to about the later part of the 2nd century A. D.

Cave No. 17 at Nasik was the latest of the series showing the full-fledged Mahāyāna religious phase ; Buddha being represented in all mudrās—standing, sitting, accompanied by chowrie-bearers, flying figures and dwarfs together with the Dhyānī Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It may be assigned to a period between 600 to 800 A. D. The important group of the caves at Nasik belonged to the reign of Andhra-Bhṛityas or the Sātavāhanas.

The Vihāra Cave No. 12, although small in size, is important for its inscription, that it was excavated by Indrāgni Datta, the Yavana, a northerner from Dattāmitrī.

CHAITYA HALL AT NASIK : The Chaitya hall at Nasik comes next and may be dated near the middle of the 1st century B. C. The interior pillars and the jambs of the doorways, in the case of the earlier caves, were erected at an angle. Gradually this angle was reduced and they were made more or less perpendicular. The degree of incline is indicative of their age. In the case of the Chaitya hall at Nasik, its pillars internally are so nearly perpendicular that their inclination might escape detection and the door-jambs are almost parallel. The façade of the Chaitya hall is a very perfect and complete design, being divided horizontally into two storeys ; the lower with an arched door, the upper with a great Chaitya window ; beside the door is a Yaksha guardian. There is an inscription on a pillar of the main Chaitya Gṛiha, the ancient word for the Chaitya hall. The architectural elements and the sculptures were the result of the generosity of several donors as shown by the inscriptions. For example, outside the cave on the doorway the epigraph shows the carvings to be the gift of the villagers of Bambhikā ; and another on the projecting ledge over the guardian to the left of the entrance, reads that "the rail pattern and the Yaksha were made by Naḍa Siri"; the third inscription on two of the pillars on the nave ascribes the completion of the Chaitya Gṛiha to Bhaṭṭa Pālika.

This Chaitya hall at Nasik, generally known by the name of Pāṇdu Leṇa, is entirely carved out of rock without any wooden portico attachment. The façade is carved in the form of lunate above the doorway. It has on the two sides of the doorway arcades supported on pilasters with capitals of addorsed animals. The architects of the interior hall at Nasik had become conscious of the decorative possibilities of the pillars since they are beautified by a square abacus on the top carrying a mass of beautiful sculptures, both animal and decorative designs of great

beauty. A special feature is the full vase motif at the bottom in which the lower portion of the shaft is inserted. This embellishment of the pillar with a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* at the base and another at the summit was found to be a very attractive feature which had its continuation in later art. Originally it seems to have had a religious significance showing the pillar or stake both to be rooted in and topped by the *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* or the immortal Full Vase. The shape of the pillars also has appreciably changed in the Nasik Chaitya Gṛiha. Instead of being massive and ponderous as in most of the rock excavations they have become tall and slender with a diameter which is 1/8th of their height, a feature which is also found in the finest Greek and Roman pillars.

In the Pāṇdu Leṇa there was also a minstrel's gallery (*Saṅgīta Śālā*) not projecting outside the Chaitya hall but inside it, supported on mortices and holes cut in the rock. The Stūpa had become more elongated by increasing the height of the drum. [Fig. 123].

JUNNAR

Forty-eight miles north of Poona is the old town of Junnar round which are several groups of rock-excavations, 150 in number. There are ten Chaitya halls and the rest are Vihāras. Like other early caves, they are mostly devoid of figure ornament. They may be dated from 2nd century B.C. to 1st century A.D., and were the result of the great movement of the rock-cut religious monuments, when it started with the first flash of enthusiasm. Inscriptions on some of the caves inform they were meant for the use of the Buddhist monks.

In the Gaṇeśa Leṇa group there is a Chaitya hall similar to that at Nasik and a Vihāra which may be said to be the finest of its kind. There are several architectural forms in the Junnar caves not found elsewhere, for instance, six Chaitya caves with square ends (*āyata*), flat roofs and without internal pillars and also one completely circular Chaitya hall (in the Tuljā group) which is quite unique and of which only other instance is the Chaitya hall at Guntupalle at east-coast.

The great peculiarity of the series is the extreme simplicity of the caves composing it. Here we do not find figures of guardians and men and women as at Karle. There is evidence that the Chaitya halls were plastered and painted. The Chaitya hall at Mānmoda has a façade with elaborate sculpture, which is also a quite unique style. On its lowermost circular front which is conceived in the form of an expanded lotus, the petal in the centre is carved with the standing figure of Śrī-Lakshmī in the midst of side lotuses with her right hand in *abhayamudrā* and left held akimbo (*kaṭyavalambita*). She is flanked by two elephants performing her *abhisheka* and standing on lotuses, both being carved in similar petals as the Goddess herself. Next to the elephants are male and female worshippers, i.e. *dampatīs*

in *añjalimudrā* or the attitude of adoration on both sides of the group. This treatment of the Goddess Gaja-Lakshmī has been conceived here in an especially charming manner both by the position over the doorway and lotus back-ground. Though found at Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhgaya and Udaigiri, it is seldom that Goddess Śrī-Lakshmī occupies so important a position as she does here. She was representing an ancient folk-cult which is given an open welcome in the religious setting of Buddhist Chaitya halls. On the edge of the small semi-circular centre of the sculpture on this façade is an inscription stating that, 'the half front was the gift of Chanda, a Yavana'. This is important as pointing to the faith of the donor with *Bhāgavata* affiliation similar to that of Heliodoros, who erected the Garuḍa-dhvaja at Besnagar. Above the fronton (*kīrtimukha*), on each side of its finial, are figures:—on the right a Nāgarāja with hoods rising from shoulder, and on the left a Garuḍa with wings from his shoulder, and behind each is a Stūpa in high relief. This representation of the Nāga-Garuḍa motif is also a unique feature which the ingenious author of this decorative conception adopted on the façade of a Buddhist Chaitya in company with Śrī-Lakshmī and Stūpas. On the two sides of the *kīrtimukha* window and a little removed from it are two door-jambs and a lintel above them, the whole forming a beautiful frame which is quite impressive and lofty and decorated with a series of bigger and smaller Chaitya windows, themselves framed by Vedikā design.

The interior of this cave measures 30′ in length and 12′ 6″ in width between the pillars of the nave. [Fig. 124].

A little to the east of this is a series of four cells with a neatly carved façade; each door has the Chaitya-window arch over it projecting about 15 in., and is carved below in the same style as over the doorway of the Nāsik Chaitya—indicative of an early date.

In the Tuljā-leṇa group, about two miles west from Junnar, there are about 12 excavations, one a Vihāra with five cells, another was perhaps a refection hall (*Bhojana-śālā*) and the most important of them all a circular Chaitya mentioned above. The façades that remain consist of Chaitya window, rail-pattern, and Stūpa ornamentation. The interior of this Chaitya hall is circular being 25′ 6″ across and its domical roof (18′) is supported on twelve plain octagonal pillars (*aṭṭhāṁsika-stambha*), arranged round the Stūpa. This architectural plan of an open pavilion supported on pillars seems to have been derived from a model of much older circular Parṇaśālās of wooden construction. One such round pavilion is actually depicted in relief on the Bharhut *Vedikā*, in which the shrine with a domed roof and finial (*stūpī*) has the form of a pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) supported on pillars with a raised platform (*maṇḍa*) in

the centre on which is placed the turban of the Buddha under a Chhatra and Yashṭi. The shrine is surrounded by a railing (*vedikā*) and prominent gateways of which one is shown in the Bharhut bas-relief. The front side of the platform is beautified with marks of the *pañjaka* design and in front of it is a smaller platform for receiving flowers (*pushpa-grahaṇī vedikā*).

There are several other Chaitya halls at Junnar with the interior carved as a rectangle in plan and with a flat roof without pillars and having Stūpa at the same position as in a round apse. They had small vestibules supported on pillars having water-pot bases and capitals and decorated with rail designs. Although there is a Chaitya window fronton but not perforated and hence light enters only through the doors.

In the Gaṇeśa leṇa group there are four Chaitya halls of which one, bearing an inscription of the time of Nahapāna, is the best example we have of the Chaitya of about the first century A. D. Its proportions are good and all the details well understood and properly applied. The interior measures about 45′ and there are five pillars on each side of the nave which have beautiful capitals with spirited figures of riders on tigers, elephants and other animals. The rich ornamentation of this Chaitya hall and its moderate dimensions make it a typical example of a Buddhist Chaitya Gṛiha as perfected after centuries of trial of architecture and sculpture.

KARLE

On the ancient highway connecting Aparānta or Konkaṇa with the eastern plains of Sahyādri in the hills known as the Bhorghāt are a number of rock-excavations as at Kondāne, Bhājā, Bedsā, and Kārle, the latter being the best known.

The Karle group of caves, located about two miles north of the Bombay-Poona road, is 78½ miles from Bombay being approached from Malavali station at a distance of 3 miles to the south. There are one magnificent Chaitya hall and three ordinary Vihāras at this place. The monument is one of the grandest and finest of its class and shows the rock-cut movement in its utmost perfection. There is an integration and dignity of architecture and sculpture in the Karle cave which is unsurpassed anywhere else. It appears that the artists responsible for this excavation were gifted with long experience of sculpting the rock and handling the chisel with the gratest mastery. A contemporary inscription in the porch mentions it as the best in the whole of *Jambudvīpa* (*Jambudipaṁhi uttamaṁ*) which seems to be a fairly correct estimate since our modern assessment of its aesthetic greatness does not fall short of it.

The Chaitya hall consisted of the following component parts :—

(1) Two lofty free-standing pillars surmounted by lion capitals.

(2) Entrance gallery or porch (*mukha-maṇḍapa*) supported on pillars with a lower storey and upper one.

(3) A minstrel's gallery (*saṅgīta-śāla*) of wooden construction projecting from the middle portion of the front wall of the porch.

(4) The back wall of the porch with a large Chaitya window (*kīrtimukha*) having within it a wooden framing of trellis work, and in the lower portion three doors giving entry to the main hall and the side aisles.

(5) Central nave or Maṇḍapa.

(6) Two long side galleries (*pradakshiṇā-patha*).

(7) Apsidal end with circular termination.

(8) A Chaitya or Stūpa in the centre of the apse (*Garbhagṛiha*).

(9) A colonnade of thirty-seven pillars, fifteen in each row of the nave and seven round the apse.

(10) A vaulted domed roof.

(11) Wooden ribs under the roof of very massive construction and original to the monument.

(12) Inscriptions engraved in several parts on the outside and inside of the monument.

A rock-excavation or the cave like the present one gave rise to a special term according to the genius of the Sanskrit language, viz. *kīrti*, literally, 'an excavation' (from the root *kṛī* to cut or chisel out, as in *utkīrṇa*). Because of this the front pillar was called *kīrti-stambha*, implying that the erection of such a pillar was accepted as the normal feature of a rock-cut cave. Originally there had existed two lofty and ponderous pillars as at Kanheri but now only one remains, the other on the right side having been removed to give place to a modern Śaiva shrine. Percy Brown writes that there were similar pillars in the shrine of the Moon god at Ur in three thousand B. C. and similar obelisks in Egyptian temples and in Solomon's temple at Jerusalum two brass pillars were erected in similar position and that "the pillars at Karle appear to have been the result of the same belief." But it is needless to go outside India in search of their archetypes, since as we have shown several times previously the raising of such pillars to face such monuments in both sacrificial and sepulchral grounds was a very ancient custom being known in the Ṛigveda itself (RV. 10. 18. 13), and the practice is attested in the case of the Lauria Nandangarh mounds and the great Stūpa of Sanchi.

The two pillars faced the two side-doors of the aisles as the left one surviving on the left side points to. They were located at a little distance from the outer screen of the porch and were thus free-standing. The existing pillar 50′ high, has sixteen sides and is surmounted by a well-designed capital consisting of an inverted lotus with flowing curved leaves, a moulding abacus with sixteen flutings and a square support in three decreasing tiers on which there are four addorsed sejant lions facing in four directions. The pillar is certainly inspired by the Aśokan lion-capital at Sarnath, of course there being marked difference in the æsthetic quality of the two.

Behind these two detached columns is the Chaitya hall of which the front portion consists of a vestibule (*antarāla-maṇḍapa*) or front porch (*mukha-maṇḍapa*). This entrance gallery consisted of two screens, one on the outside and the other in the inside, and formed a very happy adjunct to the main hall of the interior. It was conceived in two storeys, the lower one supported on two stout octagonal pillars without base or capital, and the upper one on four pillars and two pilasters. It served the purpose of a front verandah giving access to the nave through a central door and to the aisles through two side doorways. It is 15′ deep and 52′ long being greater than the interior by 7′. [Fig. 125]. The inner wall was decorated with large-sized sculpures of male and female figures who appear to be the Mithunas as in the other caves. But the Karle figures have been adjudged to be the best of their kind in India. In the two end walls of the verandah were carved front portions of elephants, standing on a base, decorated with the rail pattern and supporting above them a framed frieze, also ornamented with the rail or *Vedikā* design (but in Gupta times cut away to insert the figures of Buddha and his attendants). Above it a quadrantal moulding again surmounted by a rail design which is continued to form the sill of the great window. The two sides of the façade are carved with repetitions of Chaitya window design separated by rail-decorations. In some of the panels are the sculptures original to the excavation, which are the best of their kind in India. The spandrel spaces of the great sun-window are occupied with similar rows of Chaitya window arcading (*kīrtimukha*) and rail patterns.

In the middle of the front portion of the porch are mortice holes which supported an impressive timber construction to serve as the minstrel's gallery (*Saṅgīta Śalā*) but the same has now perished. This feature of the musicians' chamber over the portico also continued later as found in the case of the Kailāsa temple at Ellora and also on the gateways of the royal palaces in later times.

In the upper storey of the back wall the most conspicuous feature was the great opening of the fronton—the large sun-window (*kīrtimukha* proper) which originally served as the vent for throwing out the debris and later on as the main aperture for admitting

light and air to illumine the dark interior of the nave. It was virtually a Sūrya-dvāra, the Sun-door, through which entered a flood of light-beams of which the full effect is realised when the visitor stands in the centre of the inner Maṇḍapa and casts a glance on its four sides to see how each part of the excavation is bathed in sun-light. The main volume of the great illumination is distributed over the Maṇḍapa, garbha-gṛiha and the pradakshiṇā-patha so as to break the dark gloom and replace it by some divine effulgence creating a heavenly atmosphere from which it is not easy to extricate oneself. The soul is truly 'enraptured, feasted, fed' by the light-cells so abundantly piercing through the sun-window into the interior of the cave.

There is nothing in the whole architecture of the Chaityaghara possessing such supreme value from beginning to end as the Kīrimukha Window. The great horse-shoe arch is ornamented by a finial above, and its wide opening was filled with a timber framing having beautiful trellis work and lunate bands which were filled with small upright balusters. The upper framing is still preserved but the lattice filling has perished. The circular framing of lattice design may be seen in its earlier lithic form in the Lomas Ṛishi cave of Aśoka's time which was borrowed from earlier wooden prototype and continued in the succeeding rock-excavations.

The interior of the cave forms the main shrine and has an architectural grandeur of its own possessing a big nave (*maṇḍapa*) in the centre which is separated from the two side aisles by a colonnade of columns which are of great beauty and highly finished sculptural art as shown by their capitals. The nave is 124′ in length from the front doorway to the round termination behind the *Chaitya*, and 45′ 6″ in width including the two aisles each 10′ wide including the thickness of the pillars. This arrangement of the central Maṇḍapa flanked by the continuous Pradakshiṇāpatha on two sides, the three being entered by their respective entrance doors and the main object of worship, viz. the Stūpa or the Chaitya at the other end had become an established feature of the architecture of these rock-excavations and quite well known wherever the architecture travelled. It was essentially indigenous in origin and it is unwarranted to suggest any similarity for its origin from the early Christian churches.

The two long side galleries are much better disposed at Karle than elsewhere, being 10′ wide, and since the walls are closed on their two sides they produce a very sombre effect on the mind of the devout visitor, who finds in the inside hall a divine atmosphere created in the womb of the mountain.

The circular end appended to the nave forms the Garbhagṛiha, where just below the centre of the half-dome of the roof is located the solid stone Chaitya. Its drum (*aṇḍa*) is conceived in two parts, each girdled on its upper margin by a Vedikā design to separate one from the other and surmounted by a plain dome. On its top is

a massive *harmikā* having a square *vedikā* and umbrella in the centre which is of wood and represents its original form. Its canopy although now darkened by age is carved on the underside by lotus design, so that it may really be designated as a *padmātapatra.*

The richly sculptured pillars inside the cave, 37 in all forming a continuous garland, 15 on each side of the nave and 7 round the apse, are excellent examples of the stylar architecture inside any Chaitya hall of its kind. Their bases consist of a full-vase (*pūrṇa-ghaṭa*), placed on a pedestal of diminishing tiers ; the shaft is octagonal and the top is an inverted pot of the same design as the base exepting that it is covered with flowing lotus-leaves ; surmounting the same is a capital with a fluted abacus supporting two kneeling elephants (*Gaja-saṅghāṭa*) with male and female riders or *Dampatī* figures towards the nave and addorsed horse-figures towards the aisles. In some cases the Dampatī figures give place to two female figures only, all of which are very much better executed than such figures generally are. The eighth pillar on right hand side is sixteen-sided and carved with a small Stūpa and some other figures. The fifth pillar on left has a niche in which were once deposited the relics of a saint of Sopārā. The pillars are closely set and the human and animal figures on the capitals give the effect of a grand frieze as an ornamental feature of the intercolumniation. The seven pillars round the Stūpa in the apse are plain octagonal piers without either base or capital.

Above the pillars springs the vault of the great roof which is semicircular in section but since its lower sides are somewhat stilted, the total height from the floor to the apex is increased, than the true semi-diameter, being 45′. On the underside of the high domed roof were fitted in the rock massive ribs of wooden construction which are still preserved. Obviously they did not serve any architectural function in their present context but were copies from original wooden monuments of structural types. Such, indeed, was the deep influence on the minds of the rock-sculptors of the technique of the wood-carvers that every little detail was punctiliously retained as vouch-safed by a tradition of long centuries. It appears quite probable that the earlier timber constructions were being executed on a similar monumental scale.

There are several inscriptions in this cave from which its date may be inferred. There is one giving the names of Nahapāna and his son-in-law Ushavadāta mentioning the grant of a village in favour of the Chaitya hall. The dates of these rulers are a matter of much controversy but according to generally accepted chronology, they belong to the earlier wave of the Kshaharāta Śakas, contemporaneous with Śoḍāsa of Mathura and Liaka Patika of Taxila, being placed between 80-50 B. C., which seems to have been the date of the completion of this cave. An epigraph in the proch states that it was the gift of Seṭṭhi Bhūtapāla of Vaijayantī (modern Banavāsī).

The Chaitya just described being cave I, there are three others which are Vihāras; cave two being three storeyed, and No. III two storeyed. Vihāra cave IV was the gift of a Persian named Haraphāna, who lived in the reign of the Andhra King Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi about A.D. 20.

KANHERĪ (Kṛishṇagiri)

Kanherī is 16 miles north of Bombay, and five miles from Borivili (Skt. *Vihārāvalī*) Station. It was at one time a Buddhist city being conceived as a group of hundreds of caves, cut in the face of a rugged rock and situated in the midst of beautiful surroundings. The caves are in all sizes like those for two monks (*dvigarbha*), or four monks (*chaturgarbha*) with beds (*āsana-peḍhi, -piḍha,-pīṭhikā*), or bigger halls (*koḍhi, koshṭhikā*) sufficient for a large number of monks. Most of these have perfect water arrangement which is trained in channels from the top of the rock and collected in deep cisterns (*pānīya-poḍhi, pānīya-bhājana, pokharini*, or simply *poḍhi*, of the epigraphs), which were placed under the special care of a water superintendent named *Pāniyagharika*. The group was originally the outcome at the fag end of the Hīnayāna movement of rock-excavations, and as natural displays most of the characteristic features of the Karle and other groups. The cave-city was planned in the late second century A. D. during the stirring times of the Sātavāhana kings, but after the eclipse of their power went into obscurity for a couple of centuries, when during the Mahāyāna phase it was revived as a busy retreat for the Buddhist monks and continued as such until about the tenth century being embellished with a number of Buddha and Bodhisattva sculptures, some in colossal size.

The most important monument in the whole group is the Chaitya hall of considerable dimensions and having the same plan and architectural elements as in the Karle Chaitya hall which served as its model but with an obvious decline.

The porch (*gharamukha*) at Kanheri has a courtyard (*ajira, prāṅgaṇa*) in front of it which is a unique feature not found in other Chaitya halls. This fore-court is enclosed by a dwarf rail (*Vedikā*) on which there is a cluster of motifs worthy of study. In the lower-most band there are figures of standing Yakshas alternating with whorls. A few of them are four-armed, but of the two arms one is always held aloft as if to support the superimposed structure. These occupy a similar position as the Guhyaka Yakshas at Sanchi and other places. In the next horizontal band is a row of animals, elephant, bull, boar, camel etc., which corresponds to the *chatushpada paṅkti* motif mentioned in the *Mahāvaṁsa*. This decorative motif of the plinth gradually fanned out into the vertical patterns like *gajathara, narathara,*

aśvathara, simhathara of the plinth of the Brāhmanical temples. Above this horizontal band is a railing proper consisting of uprights and three cross-bars, all stamped with full blown (*sūrya*) and half (*chanda*) rosettes, being a copy of the *padmavaravedikā*. On them is a conventionalised festooning garland being copied from the meandering lotus-creepers of Bharhut and Mathura coping-stones. Punctuating the upright posts are broad pillars occupied by bold figures of worshippers. [Fig. 126].

At the ends of the fore-court stand two giagantic pilasters with octagonal shafts attached to the rock on the backside, very much in the same position as the two columns at Karle, and serving as true Kīristambhas. They were surmounted by lions supported on abacus held on the heads of three atlante Yakshas and probably themselves served as the support of the Dharmachakra emblem; on the western pillar the lions are preserved, and on the other only the three corpulent gnomes.

The front verandah, termed as *garbhadvāra,* is comprised of two screens, the outer and the inner, conceived in two storeys, the lower and the upper. Both of which were of a unified plan bestowing an unusual grandeur on the façade of the cave. The outer screen has three openings between five pillars and in its middle front portion motice holes for the attachment of a projecting Saṅgīta-śālā made entirely of wood, as at Karle. Above it was a clerestory with five window openings on the front side and the large sun-window on the back-side which is hemi-spherical and seems to have been unfinished. In the lower storey there are three usual entrance doors for giving entry to the nave and the two aisles. The figures of donors carved in the close-grained rock in this particular portion are extremely bold and of superb workmanship that have been unaniously adjudged to be the best of their class found anywhere else. The art of sculpture in this case is perfect so far as the ancient sculptures are concerned, but the same cannot be said with respect to the Buddhist images wrought in the Mahāyāna phase of restoration (c. 5th century). The statues of two pairs of *Dampatis* are beautifully framed within a border of two lion-capitals on the two sides and rows of dentils above and below. The male figures wear conspicuous turbans, heavy ear-pendants, flat torques and necklaces, armlets, wristlets and *dhoti* with folds and girdle. In their upraised right hand they hold *chauries*. The two female figures on the proper right side of their husbands also are richly ornamented and draped, and of stature.

Crossing the vestibule one enters the main chaitya-hall which is in smaller size than that at Karle, being about two-third, measuring 86′6″ long, 40′ across between the two walls and 38′ high from the floor to the apex. There is a colonnade of 34 pillars on the two sides of the nave and round the apse. [Fig. 127]. Only about half of them are ornamented with bases and capitals of *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* design. The latter

support complicated figures which are inferior to those at Karle. For example, in one case we find first a moulding of lotus leaves, then a reel-and-beed border and on it a *Bodhi*-tree with a platform under it showing foot-prints being worshipped by two kneeling male figures, two standing female figures, and two elephants above, all holding water-jars. The anxiety to accommodate too much detail appears to be the defect of the reliefs at Kanheri. They had too many ideas and an anxiety to illustrate all of them in a huddled manner. The arched roof shows mortice holes or slots with wooden pins to which at one time were attached the wooden ribs now perished. The *Stūpa* under the hemi-spherical dome of the apse is cylindircal (16' in diameter) and quite plain with its umbrella now destroyed. Indeed, in spite of the late date of the cave, the wooden attachments at Kanheri seem to be on the increase.

An inscription on the two front pillars records that the *chaitya* was begun by two brothers, the merchants Gajasena and Gajamitra, in the reign of Gautamīputra Śriyajña Sātakarṇi, i.e., about 180 A.D. This rock excavation shows a decline in architecture which may be due to the inferior quality of the rock, inexperience of the workmen and the fact that the superintendent of work was simply a Buddhist monk, Bodhika by name.

CHRONOLOGY—The movement of rock-excavation had wide extensions in time and space. It covered the country from Saurashtra to the eastern ocean at Khaṇḍagiri and Udaigiri and from Ajanta to the Barabar hills near Gaya. It was an extremely wide area and as we have seen the technique of sculpting in the rock was the same everywhere with only a few local variations in architectural style about the façade, decorative motifs, pillars, sculptures, form of the inner hall, roofing and combination of cells, etc. In point of time the movement spread over a thousand years starting in the 3rd century B.C. in the time of Aśoka to about 7th century A.D. when the Mahāyāna phase came to its end. The caves are divided geographically by a grouping, viz. the Barabar group, the Udaigiri group, the Bhor Ghat or Sahyādri group and the Ajanta group. That was the Hīnayāna phase of the *Leṇa*-excavations covering the period from the 3rd century B.C. to 2nd century A.D. Within these limits much of the work in different centres proceeded side by side. The geographical groups pointed out above more or less arrange themselves into some sort of chronological sequence. The first and earliest caves are those in eastern India where the movement originally started under the inspiring direction of Aśoka in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills about the middle of the 3rd century B.C. This was closely followed by the caves near Bhuvaneśvara in the Udaigiri and and Khandagiri hills. Those in the extreme west in the Kathiawar Peninsula, viz., at Junagarh, Talāja and Sana are next in order. We then come to that group of caves lying east of Bombay in

the Bhorghat hills and including Bhaja, Kondane, Bedsa, Karle. To the north of these are those of Junnar and Nasik. With this may be placed the small isolated group of earlier Pitalkhora and Ajanta caves. The next section takes us to the Kanheri caves in the Salsette island.

There are certain architectural features which indicate the relative sequence of the excavations :

(1) The curve and particular shape of the fronton arch forming the main feature of the façade—the curve of the *chaitya* window changed and tended to be more perfect as the style progressed. The test is that the more rudimentary the curve the earlier the example. In the the case of the Lomas Rishi cave the curvature is most rudimentary. About a century later at Bhaja, we meet for the first time the Kīrtimukha window taking the form of a horse-shoe arch or elongated *ardha-chandra* shape which was also the form of the inner apse and more truly be designated as *dvyasra* or *Besara.*

At Kondane there is a further evolution in the curve of the Chaitya window arch, as pointed out by Brown, the curve denotes an advance, as there is a slight inward return to the spring of the arch, and the whole is more vigorous and firm in out line. At Ajanta (IX) and at Karle, we find the *Chaitya* arch has reached its highest perfection and maturity as it could in its natural evolution in this phase, a shape which is retained for the remainder of the Hīnayāna period. Afterwards, from the fifth century A. D. onwards, in its Mahāyāna phase, the arched opening of the Chaitya window gradually becomes narrower at the base as in cave XIX at Ajanta, until in the case of the Viśvakarmā Chaitya hall at Ellora (early 7th century) the horse-shoe arch is replaced by almost a complete circle. At Ajanta the *stūpī* on the apex is evolved as an elaborate prominent feature with little scroll decoration on the two sides and a very conspicuous feature is the emergence of two *simhakarṇa* motifs in the exterior outline which is made not only much more elaborate but is repeated twice on both sides in the Viśvakarmā cave,

(2) The screen in the outer wall of the verandah originally consisted of wood as at Bhaja. But as the architecture developed this was carved out of rock itself in stone.

(3) The front portion (*gharamukha*) was at first restrained and dignified as at Bhaja, and later on elaborated with the addition of the two towering pillars (*kīrtistambha*) as at Karle, and about a century later was conceived with still greater elaboration, viz. by adding a terrace and a Vedikā in front as at Kanheri. The portico (*garbhadvāra*) was conceived in the beginning as an integral part of the *Chaitya* hall as at Bhaja, but later on as an independent unit as at Karle where it is wider than the *maṇḍapa* and the

two a isles taken together and also comparatively greater in depth than the other verandahs being 15 feet.

(4) The extent to which the surface is covered with the rail decoration, is a fair test of the age of the building. In the verandah of the Bedsa cave nearly the whole of the ornamentation is made of the miniature rails and repetitions of window fronts, i. e. *Chaitya* window. The miniature rail pattern gradually becomes less after the groups of the early caves and disappears only in the fourth or the fifth century A. D. The rail or *vedikā* design was the symbol of marking out the boundary of a religious or divine monument borrowed from the wooden architecture of the sacrificial altars and the façade of the caves was naturally loaded with it in the earlier stages, but subsequently lessened as more attention was paid to sculpture and details of interior decoration.

(5) Wooden attachments. As is often noticed the whole architecture of the rock cave was borrowed from wooden prototypes, viz. timber *Parṇaśālas* of massive construction with arched roofs and *toraṇa* doorways filled with wooden *pañjara* or lattice work. This tradition was so persistent that actual wooden attachments were retained in the case of rock caves by the force of sheer practice on the part of the artisans. As for example we have in the earlier caves the massive arched groins or ribs of wood under the domed roof as at Karle, also the wooden framing and trellis work filling the sun-window, and in several cases heavy structures of minstrel's gallery in wood which though now perished once existed as shown by the elaborate mortice-holes for the attachment of their beams and ledge-like projections. At Pitalkhora we find further elimination of wood work in that the arched joists instead of those being in wood have been cut in the rock. Even the umbrellas on the top of the *Stūpas* inside the *harmikā* were once of wood as at Karle.

(6) Inclination of the pillars—The pillars of the *maṇḍapa* slope inwards at a considerable angle as at Bhaja, which is unpleasing also. The slope of the interior pillars is a guide about the relative age of the Chaitya halls. The greater the angle of the incline, the nearer it was to the timber original where such tilting of the pillars was an architectural necessity in order to counteract the heavy superstructure of the roof. In the rock-excavation such a device was quite unnecessary, but the designers traditionally used to the principle of obliquity in the pillars continued to adhere to it. For them it was natural, but for us a matter of grave objection which to an extent cuts across the æsthetic appearance of the otherwise beautiful and symmetrical architecture of the chaitya hall. The same may be said about the jambs of the three doorways giving access to the *maṇḍapa* and the *pradakshiṇāpatha* where the sloping

doorjamb with a relative incline of the plumb-line was made a characteristic feature in the earlier caves, until in the later ones the two jambs became nearly parallel.

(7) The shape of the pillars also indicates an evolution of the archititecture. In the Aśokan group of the Barabar hills there are no pillars in the interior *maṇḍapas* at all. In Western Indian group the Chaitya hall at Bhaja shows the colonnade of which the pillars are plain without bases or capitals. The same is the case with the Chaitya-hall at Bedsa where the octagonal shafts of the pillars do not have any base or capital but some of them are carved with the *chakra, triratna* and other Buddhist symbols. Two features for the decoration of the pillars of the colonnade were gradually evolved; firstly the *purṇa-ghaṭa* in which the lower portion of the shaft was inserted, and also the same placed on the top of the shaft in an inverted position as at Nasik. Subsequently another feature was added, viz., capitals with male and female riders on animals, which in Indian terminology were known as *Gaja-saṁghāṭa, Haya-saṁghāṭa, Vṛisha-saṁghāṭa* etc., for example in the Karle Chaitya hall both the *purṇaghaṭa* and animal capitals are seen as objects of outstanding beauty and the same are repeated at Kanheri although in a somewhat debased form.

(8) The inner dimensions of the Chaitya hall were smaller in the beginning but increased in the later caves, e. g. Lomas Rishi (48′ × 20′ × 12′ high), Bhaja (55′ × 26′ × 29′ high), Karle (124′ × 46½ × 45′ high).

(9) The width of the aisles also became more expansive in the later caves than in the earlier ones, e. g. Bhaja (3½′ wide), Karle (10′ wide).

CHAPTER X

KUSHĀṆA ART AT MATHURĀ

Mathurā as a Centre of Art—

Mathurā was a flourishing centre of art in north India from the beginning of the Christian era up to about the seventh century A.D. During the Kushāṇa period in the first three centuries of the Christian era Mathurā was the most prominent centre for the making of sculptures and images which were exported and supplied to distant centres like Sanchi, Sarnath, Kauśāmbī, Śrāvastī, the Panjab, Bairat in Rajasthan and Bengal where Mathura sculptures have been found. The sculptors of Mathura worked on a special variety of spotted red sandstone which was quarried at Sikri, Rūpbas and other places in the adjoining area. Here Buddhism, Brahmanism and Jainism had their respective centres and places of pilgrimage and naturally all three of them inspired their own sculptures, images and architectural *stūpas*, or shrines. Fortunately, not less than five thousand of these ancient relics have been found at Mathura. A majority of them belongs to Kushāṇa period. The reigns of the imperial Kushāṇas like Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva form the Golden Age of Mathura sculpture attaining to a perfection of art style which has seldom been equalled in Indian art history. The artists of Mathura had taken their cue from the master craftsmen working at Bharhut and Sanchi; but adopting the ancient art traditions and motifs they developed a new enthusiasm and technique with the result that the creative genius of the Mathura masters fructified into one of the greatest schools of Indian sculpture of which the contents, motifs, style and characteristic features are comprehensive and of the highest æsthetic quality. The Mathura artists derived the fullest advantage from the traditional stock of tree and animal motifs that were known to their predecessors at Sanchi and Bharhut. But they have added many new things of their own. Nature is freely represented and partakes in a real manner of the joys and emotions of human beings. Decorative designs are also varied, some taken from the older stock and others improvised for the first time.

Mathura Art Style and Contents—

As regards style the artists left behind the rigid conventions of the laws of frontality in representing human and animal figures. They show better competence in the handling of the human figure and take delight in representing the female form in many new poses and at all angles. The forms are elegant and the use of ornaments and drapery is kept at a minimum. Female beauty is the strong point of the Mathura

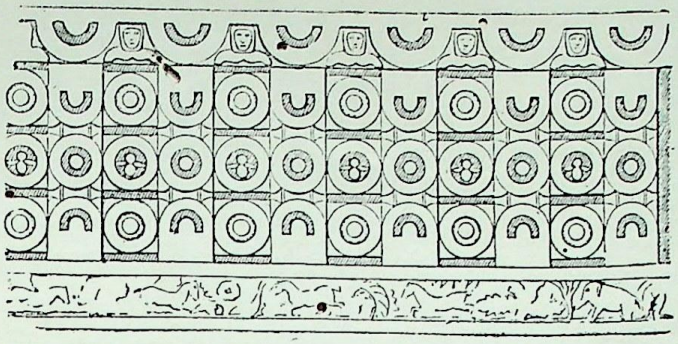


Fig. 126

Fig. 131

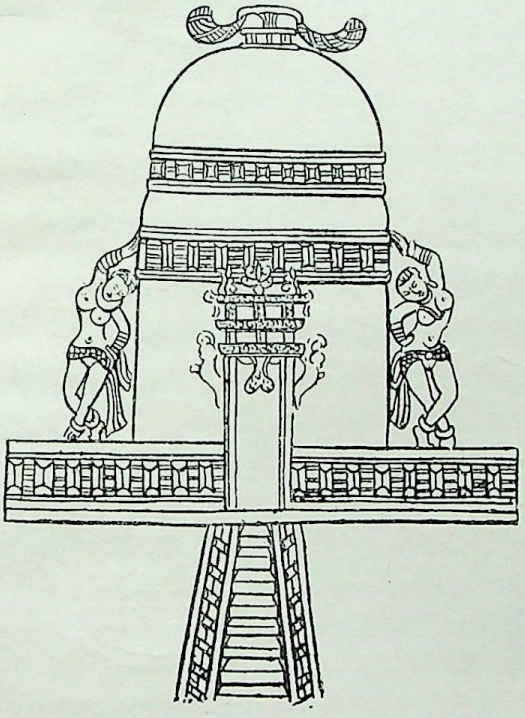


Fig. 130

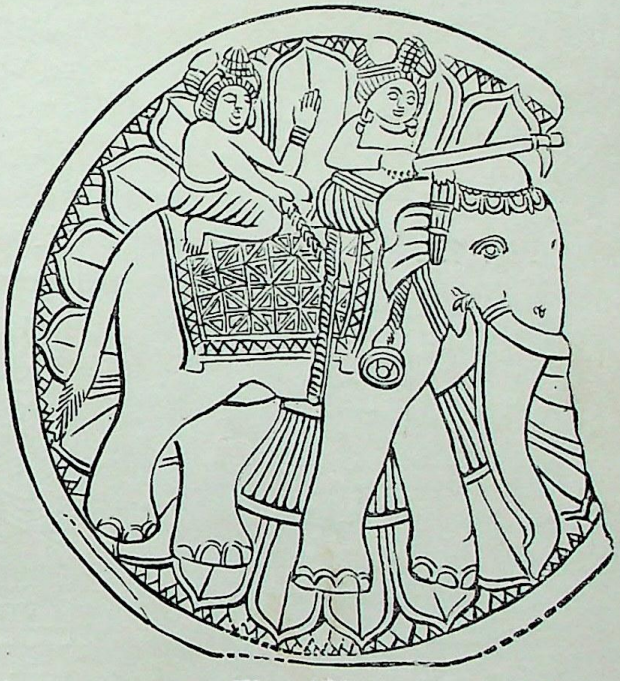


Fig. 128

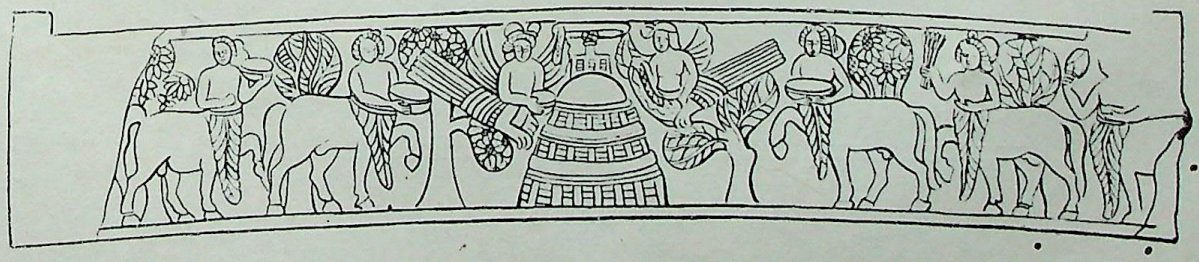
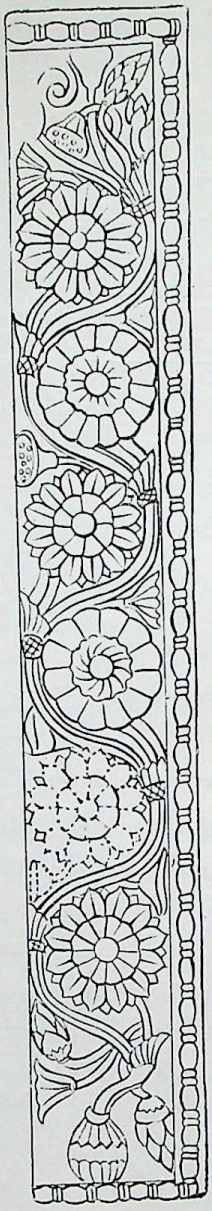


Fig. 129

Fig. 132 a



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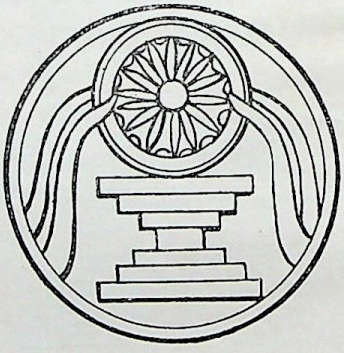

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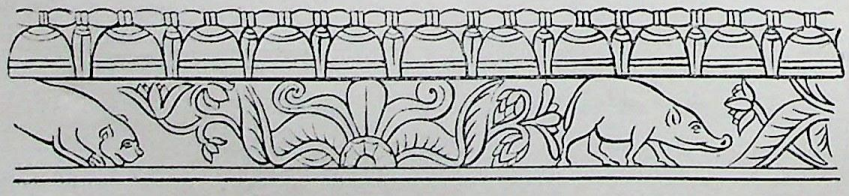

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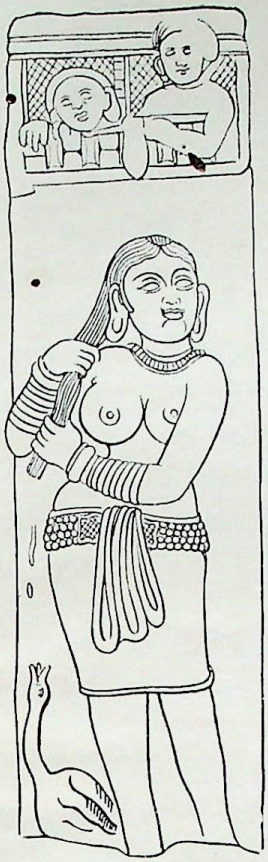

Fig. 134

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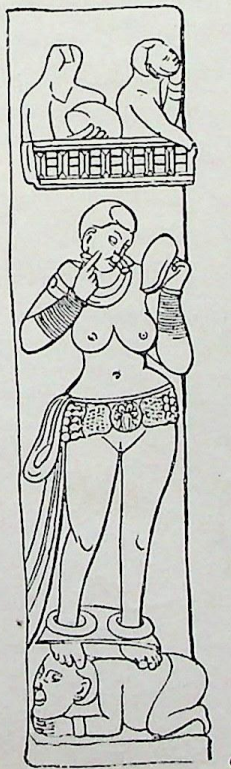

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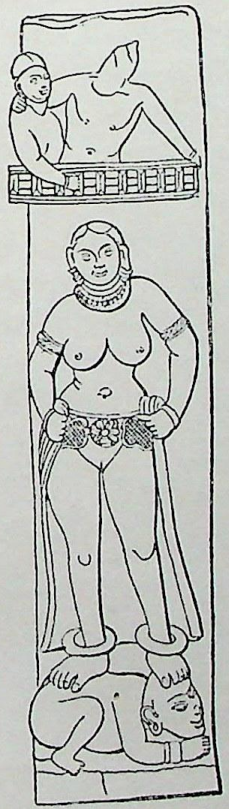

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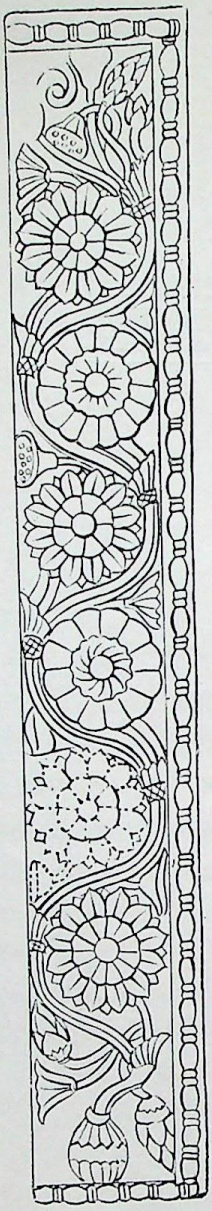

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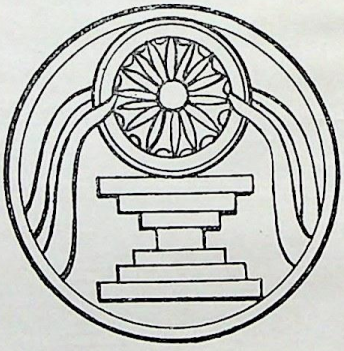

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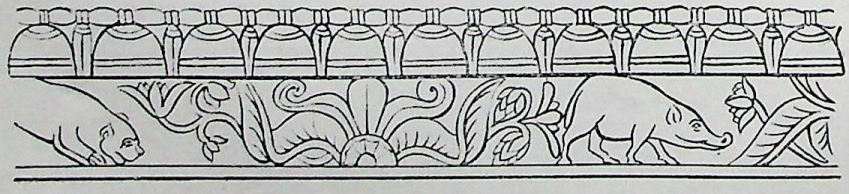

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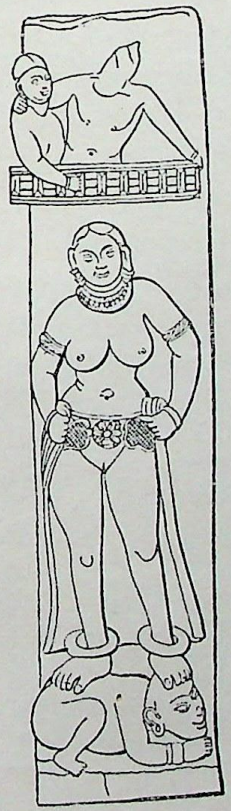

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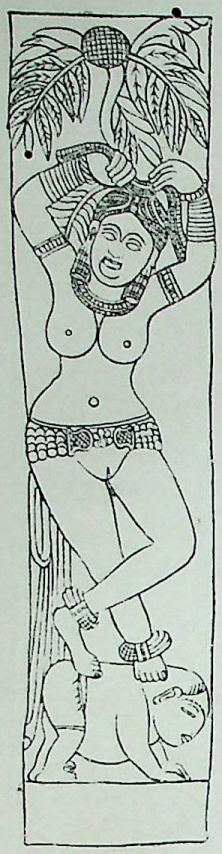

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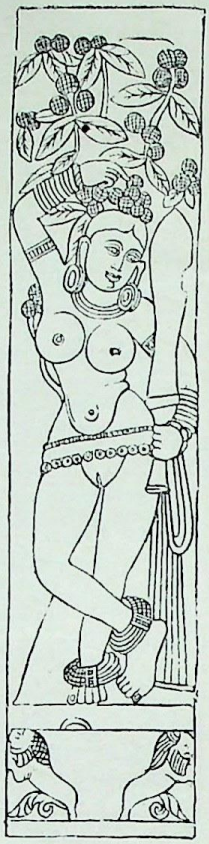

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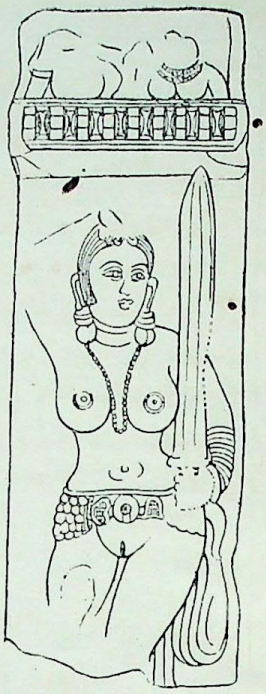

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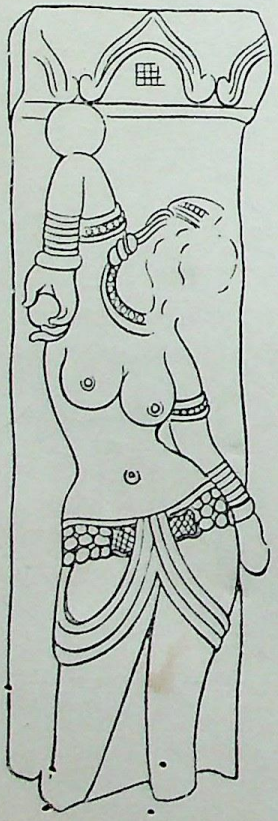

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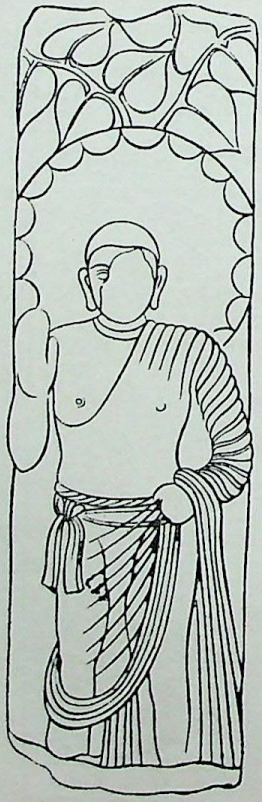

Fig. 138 b

Fig. 139 a

Fig. 139 b

sculptures as illustrated by the standing figures of *Śālabhañjikā* women on the railing pillars. They are engaged in various pastimes and garden and water sports (*udyāna—, salila-krīḍā*) and enjoying a free life under the open sky and sunshine. The railing female figures are verily documents of social culture. The figures have been carved in bold relief and in several planes.

The striking beauty of the Mathura figures becomes evident if we compare them with the products of the other schools during the preceding period. The artists had become conscious of the new phenomenon, freedom from trammels and conventions, and they were handling in a masterful manner both religious and secular sculpture in terms of a very wide symbolism.

As regards the contents of this school one is overwhelmed with the original creative activity and it may be said with justification that Indian art had hardly been so creative during any other epoch. The Mathura artists were responsible for one of the greatest creations of world's art, viz. the Buddha image. For the first time we find here that the Buddha is represented in a human form. The Buddha image constitutes the most original contribution of the Mathura School in the field of Indian art, and we shall examine the date implication and the variety of forms of the Buddha image as it developed in the Mathura School.

The Mathura artists have also the credit of originating various images of Brāhmanical gods and goddesses. For the first time we come across the icons of such deities as Vishṇu, Lakshmī, Durgā, Sapta-Mātṛikās Kārttikeya, etc. The earliest iconographic forms of the gods and goddesses were more or less determined under the impact of the Bhāgavata movement of Bhakti or devotion which had its earliest beginnings at Mathura and almost engulfed the whole of the north India during the Kushāṇa-Gupta period. The Mathura school of sculpture presents the richest material for a detailed study of the images of the Hindu deities. No study of Indian iconography can be complete without an intimate study of Mathura material.

As regards the Jaina sculpture Mathura again holds the supreme place because of the earliest Jaina Stūpas and Tīrthaṅkara images, that have been found in India. There were two Jaina Stūpas at Mathura. One was built in the Śuṅga period and the other during Kushāṇa period. Fortunately archaeological remains of both of these with about thousand sculptures were found during the excavations at the site of Kaṅkālī ṭīlā. Its name was the *Deva-nirmita Stūpa*, i. e. the Stūpa was considered so ancient and holy as to be belived to have been erected by the gods. So far as the details of the Stūpa architecture are concerned they are almost the same as in the case of a Buddhist Stūpa. For example, the Jaina Stūpa also consisted of a tumulus in the centre with a railing round it pierced by four gateways (*Toraṇa*).

This Stūpa was embellished with the greatest enthusiasm both in the form of stone sculpture and architectural forms of the upright pillars, cross-bars, coping stones, architraves, door-jambs, horizontal beams, religious emblems, stairways, sloping, balustrades, etc. The female figures on the railing pillars in a Jaina Stūpa are of the same type of represention as found on the Buddhist Stūpa.

The Mathura artists have to their credit a large number of Tīrthaṅkara sculptures whose earliest forms were settled by them and directed the subsequent course of Jaina iconography. Tīrthaṅkara images are of two kinds, viz. standing and seated. The standing images are depicted in the *kāyotsarga* (Pkt. *kāusagga*) pose (*mudrā*). A seated image depicted the Tīrthaṅkara in cross-legged posture (*padmāsana*) with his hands placed in the lap (*aṅkamadhye*) and the whole body as well as the head and eyes fixed in an attitude of meditation. According to the canons of Jaina iconography each Tīrthaṅkara had its own cognizance (*lāñchhana*) and these were actually represented in the case of the Jaina images from about the 7th century A.D. onwards. But in the early Mathura school the cognizance symbols have not been evolved and we have to recognise a particular Tīrthaṅkara from the inscription engraved on the pedestal. However, an exception was made in the case of two of them, viz. Ṛishabhadeva (also called Ādinātha) the first Tīrthaṅkara, who is depicted with a couple of locks of hair falling on the two shoulders, and Supārśvanātha the seventh Tīrthaṅkara who is shown with a canopy of serpent hoods round his head.

We imagine Mathura as a very eclectic centre of religious movement embracing many a different sect but cultivating an attitude of harmony and tolerance towards one another. The traditional folk cults of Yaksha and Nāga worship also have their fullest share in Mathura religion and art as represented by a considerable number of sculptures depicting Yakshas and Yakshīs, and Nāgas and Nāgīs. Mathura was also a centre for the worship of the mother goddesses whose ancient forms are represented in the numerous terracotta figurines and their particular Indian manifestations in the form of the images of goddesses like Śrī-Lakshmī, Vasudhārā, Ambikā, Mahishāsuramardinī, Bhadrā, Hārītī, Saptamātṛikās, etc.

Both from the points of the varying contents and the creative originality of style as well as the quality and number of its creations the Mathura school of sculpture occupies the supreme place in the study of Indian art and is worthy of a patient and detailed study.

Stūpa Architecture

The Stūpa monument had been developed in its most elaborate form at Bharhut and Sanchi. The Mathura architects inherited the same structural traditions

but of their monumental Stūpas with cylindrical drum and dome and *harmikā* no example has been preserved. We, however, know that there were an early Śuṅga Stūpa and a second Kushaṇa Stūpa built by the Jainas at Kāṅkālī ṭīlā. There was also a Buddhist Stūpa built in the time of Huvishka and another at the site of Bhūteśvara. The Stūpas were demolished but a large number of railing pillars, cross-bars and copings have been preserved. From them we know that the size of the gateways, of the horizontal architraves and of the upright posts was much reduced at Mathura. There is only one bigger example (J I) of a railing upright and of a couple of Śuṅga cross-bars which have been found ; the one showing an elephant with riders in a medallion and the other with beautiful head wearing a conspicuous head-dress. [Fig. 128].

With respect to the earlier Stūpas at Mathura we read in the life of Yuan Chwang : In the kingdom of Mathura there are still to be seen the Stūpas in which were deposited of old the relics of the holy disciples of Śākyamuni, viz. Śāriputra, Mudgalāyana, Pūrṇa-Maitrāyaṇīputrā, Upāli, Ānanda, Rāhula and Mañjuśrī. On the yearly festivals, the religious assemble in crowds at these Stūpas, and make their several offerings at the one which is the object of their devotion. The followers of Abhidharma offer to Śāriputra, and those who practise contemplation (*dhyāna*) to Mudgalāyana, those who adhere to the Sūtras pay their homage to Pūrṇa Maitrāyaṇīputra. Those who study the Vinaya honour Upāli, religious women honour Ānanda, those who have not yet fully instructed (catechumens) honour Rāhula ; those who study the Mahāyāna honour all the Bodhisattvas. Five or six *li*, i. e. about a mile and a quarter to the east of the town is a monastery on the hill said to have been built by the venerable Upagupta. His nails and beard are preserved there as relics." These seven Stūpas with the exception of that of Rāhula, are the same as those noted by Fa-hian in the fourth century A. D. We know from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* that Sārīputta, the foremost of the highly wise, Mahā Moggallāna, the foremost of the possessors of miraculous powers, Puṇṇa Mantaniputra, the foremost of the preachers of Dhamma, Rāhula, the foremost of the students, Ānanda, the foremost of the vastly learneds, and Upāli, the foremost of the masters of Vinaya, were the most proficient disciples of the Buddha in subjects noted against them and their names can be reconised in Huen-Tsang's list of saint's whose Stūpas existed at Mathura *from days of old* with relics of the above worthies enshrined in them from a remote antiquity. What that period could possibly have been when Stūpas were raised over the relics of these great teachers ? It seems but reasonable to suppose that it should have been the age of Aśoka when Mathura was fitly honoured by the construction of a number of holy Stūpas. Nor need the mention of Mañjuśrī disturb us, for Huen-Tsang is careful enough to associate the Mahāyānists with the

worship of the Stūpa of Mañjuśrī and the other Bodhisattvas, who were thus isolated from the gallery of older patriarchs being worshipped by their respective followers.

Not a single one of these early Stūpas has been traced at Mathura, but the remaining sculptures offer firm proof that Buddhist and Jaina Stūpas existed at Mathura during Śunga times. The Stūpa was a raised tumulus enshrining relics of the holy patriarchs and was girdled by triple Vedikās, one on the ground, the next in the middle and the third one on the flat-top which supported the *harmikā* or mansion of gods.

A few of these Stūpas are illustrated in several bas-reliefs three of which are worth mentioning. The earliest one is hemispherical at the base and has a decreasing diameter towards the elongated top, ornamented with a circular ground railing, two intermediate railings, and a *harmikā* with a railing and a *chhatra*. This is being worshipped by Suparṇas and Kinnaras, and perhaps represents the earliest Stūpa built by Jainas at Mathura which may be identified with the *Deva-nirmita* Stūpa, and may be placed about the beginning of the second century B.C. [Fig. 129]. The next stage is shown by the Stūpa carved on the Loṇaśobhikā Āyāgapaṭṭa, and assignable to the first century A. D. It consists of a staircase leading to the first high terrace, the ground balustrade with a high gateway having all the details of a typical *toraṇa*, viz. bracket *śālabhañjikās*, three architraves, small uprights etc., path of circumambulation, the elongated drum and dome ornamented with two intermediate railings instead of one and the third railing round the *harmikā*. [Fig. 130]. The upright pillars carved with a number of lotuses and animals inside medallions belonged to the railing, known as *padmavaravedikā* of the first Stūpa, whereas the upright posts carved with female *śālabhañjikā* figures in alto-relievo formed part of the second Stūpa built in early Kushāṇa times. Besides these two Jaina Stūpas we have a specimen of a Buddhist Stūpa at Mathura carved on an architrave (M 3). It shows an elongated structural building with several storeys marked by *vedikās*, which is similar to the Stūpas in the Gandhara country of the Kushāṇa age. [Fig. 131].

In the present state of our knowledge we may draw attention only to discreet members forming part of the railings and gateways. The most appropriate architectural element in the hands of Mathura sculptors were the railing pillars on the decoration of which they spent their highest skill and a perfection of plastic art not attained at any time before and after. Of the *toraṇa* specimens of Śuṅga times are two pillars with animal capital with a lintel carved on the two faces with scenes of Stūpa worship (mentioned above) by Suparṇas and Kinnaras offering garlands and householders riding in procession. (J 535 Lucknow Museum). There are also two *toraṇa-śālabhañjikā* figures carved on the two sides which were fixed as brackets bonding together the

upright posts and the lowermost horizontal beam. Their drapery and ornaments as also the frontal carving mark them out as typical Śuṅga specimens. Several of the *toraṇa* examples show the spiral *makara* ornament as seen at Bharhut. The general style of sculptures, fondness for depicting Jātaka scenes, the zest for portraying standing female figures on the upright posts and the several details of ornamentation like the battlement motif, indicate that the artisans at Mathura were inspired by the Bharhut prototypes. It is gratifying to see that the *repertoire* on which they worked at Mathura was a comprehensive one welcoming as many motifs as they could from many sources.

PADMAVARAVEDIKĀ

The highest perfection of Mathura art is seen in the carving of its railing comprised of uprights, cross-bars and copings, all of which were ornamented with decorative motifs and designs showing great originality and a richness greater than even that at Bharhut. Here the artists have accepted some of the older motifs specially of those of the variety of lotuses and also introduced many new ones specially those of fabulous creatures, and fish-tailed sea-monsters.

There are two types of railing clearly distinguished at Mathura. An earlier one marked by several features, viz. 1. profusion of lotus designs in medallions, 2. the number of medallions which is generally three in the middle and one half each above and below, 3. bevelling of square edges to convert them into octagonal form (*aṭṭhaṁsika*), 4. absence of human or divine figures on pillars, 5. absence of human heads inside cross-bar medallions as are found at Bharhut, 6. carving in low relief. These features distinguish the railing the remains of which belong to the earlier Jaina Stūpa at Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā. From an account in the Rāyapaseṇiya Sutta we know that this kind of railing was styled as *Padmavara-vedikā*. "Why, O Revered Sir ! is the Padmavaravedikā called by that particular name ?"

"O Gautama ! It is called Padmavaravedikā since on its several parts (*dese dese*), in several places (*tahiṁ tahiṁ*), on the rails, on the stairway balustrades, on rail planks, in between two rails on the uprights, on their sides, on their copings, in between two pillars, on crossbars, in between crossbar sockets, on sides of crossbars, on the spaces between two cross-bars, on the wings, on the side balustrades, on the corner pillars, on spaces of the side pillars, were carved many kinds of lotus designs, viz. *utpala* (blue lotus), *padma* (red lotus), *kumuda* (lily), *subhaga*, *saugandhika*, *puṇḍarīka*

(White lotus), *mahāpuṇḍarīka*, *śatapatra* and *sahasrapatra*...And it is for this reason, O Gautama, that the place is called *padmavaravedikā*."[1]

From the detailed mention of the numerous spaces available for ornamental carving it appears that the description was meant for a railing of timber construction. In the actual stone railing found at Mathura the spaces are reduced but the fact remains that the pillars and the cross bars are profusely ornamented with lotus designs of various forms. The most interesting decorative designs on this earlier railing at Mathura are the animal figures, e. g. fishtailed elephant (*hastimachchha*, *jalebha*, J. 427), fishtailed crocodile (*magaramachchha* J 421), fishtailed winged lion (*sapaksha vyāghra-machchha*), fishtailed wolf, fishtailed griffin (*śyena machchha*). [Fig. 132]. To these marine motifs the Aṅgavijjā adds *naramachchha*, *gomachchha* and *assamachchha*. Another feature is the decoration of winged animals which is peculiar to Mathura, e.g. winged lion, winged antelope, winged wolf, winged goat, etc. The crossbars also illustrate many kinds of medallions containing a number of auspicious and decorative designs, e. g. kalpavṛiksha inside railing, winged auspicius conch (*bhadraśaṅkha*) oozing from its mouth a stream of punchmarked coins, stūpa, honey suckle (*muchakunda*), *bhikshāpātra* placed on a raised pedestal, elephant, bull, deer, human-headed lion, wolf, and five petalled, eight, ten, twelve and many petalled lotuses.

It is stated in the Rāyapaseṇiya that a variety of rhizomes decorated the ideal railing of Suryābhadeva, viz. padmalatā, nāga-, aśoka-, champaka-, chūta-, vāsantī-, kunda-, atimukta-, and śyāmālatā. Of these several may be seen in beautiful meanders on the uprights and copings, e. g. lotus creeper. [Fig. 133].

The coping stones of this railing are of great artistic beauty decorated with a number of floral and animal designs, e.g. rows of bells (*gaṇṭāpaṅkti*) above and lotus creepers below. Amongst animals may be noticed, griffin, rhinoceros, fishfailed lion, tiger, bull and boar.

Thus we see that the earlier sculptors who organised the magnificent *Padmavaravedikā* in its fullfledged form round a Stūpa were working on the basis of an extensive *repertoire* of motifs selected both for their decorative and religious signi-

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1. से केणट्ठेणं भंते ! एवं वुच्चइ—पउमवरवेइया पउमवरवेइया ? गोयमा। पउमवरवेइया णं तत्थ देसे देसे तहिं तहिं वेइयासु वेइयाबाहासु य वेइयफलएसु य वेइयपुडंतरेसु य खंभेसु खंभबाहासु खंभसीसेसु खंभपुडण्तरेसु सूईसु सूईमुखेसु सूईफलएसु सूईपुडंतरेसु पक्खेसु पक्खबाहासु पक्खपेरंतेसु पक्खपुडंतरेसु बहुयाइं उप्पलाइं पउमाइं कुमुयाइं नलिणाइं सुभगाइं सोगंधियाइं पुंडरीयाइं महापुंडरीयाणि सयवत्ताइं सहस्सवत्ताइं सव्वरयणामयाइं अच्छाइं पडिरूवाइं महया वासिक्कयछत्तसमाणाइं पण्णत्ताइं समणाउसो। से एएणं अट्ठेण गोयमा ! एवं वुच्चइ—पउमवरवेइया पउमवरवेइया।

Rājapraśniya Sūtra, Vaidya edn. pp. 172-3.

ficance but obviously inclined more on the aesthetic side. The artists were conscious of their obligation to the ornamental side of such an important architectural element as the *vedikā* which conferred on the Stūpa its full glory. In the actual railings either in wood or stone there were a number of other decorative features associated with the upright posts or gateways, e. g. *chandana-kalaśa* (*pūrṇaghaṭa*), rows of *nāgadanta* or ivory projections with hanging garlands and necklaces, spotted waterpots (*bhiṅgāra*), mirror (Skt. *ādarśa*, Pkt. *āyaṁsa*), pendants (*śikya*) with incense pots, baskets full of flowers, unguents, ornaments, garments etc., throne, umbrella, chāmara, and ten kinds of *śṛiṅgāra* caskets. Of these there are literary description as forming part of *vedikā* decoration but actual specimens are naturally wanting. There is one fact, however, which draws particular attention, viz. the great lotus garland (*mahāpushkara sraj*) with which the *vedikā* was actually decorated. It consisted of thousands of flowers interwoven with many varieties of floral wealth and foliage, and which in its gorgeous form was considered to be the choicest gift offered to adorn the body of the Stūpa. The presence of such a gigantic lotus garland in the carvings at Bharhut and Mathura makes us look back into a much greater antiquity when these objects were real, and points to a natural transition from actual specimens to engravings in art.

The style of Mathura railing gives some indication of its very early date. The carving is all in low relief which is near to wooden prototypes. There is a want of human figures in alto-relievo. One of the very stricking features is that the Uttarakuru motifs of the wishfulfilling trees and creepers producing ornaments, clothes etc. which form such a common feature at Bharhut are completely absent in the Mathura railing pointing to the priority of the religious concept of the latter even to that of Bharhut. The Jaina tradition of the building of the Devanirmita Stūpa also assigns it to very early times, and it is likely that the Stūpa and the railing were put up in the 3rd century B.C.

The architecture of the Stūpa and the railing found its own development at Mathura of which we find profuse evidence for the Kushāṇa period. As already pointed out, the Stūpas became elongated in form resembling the *mahābubbula* or high water bubble. But the railing underwent the greatest change as shown by the following features: the pillars are square in section, they are generally divided into three sections on the front side, viz. a prominent male or female figure in the middle portion carved in bold relief, a crouching dwarf (*guhyaka*) below, and a projecting terrace often with human figures above. The human figures combine several traditions, viz. that of Yakshas and Yakshīs as at Bharhut, heavenly girls (*devakumārikās*) whose presence was necessary in a Stūpa, and that of women in social pastimes, donors and worshippers in *aṅjalimudrā*, and of divine figures. The pillars are decorated on their back with

several Jātaka scenes, e. g. Śibi Jātaka, Vyāghrī J., Kachchhapa J., Ulūka J., Valahassa J.

The artists of the Kushāṇa railing pillars both in the Jaina and Buddhist Stūpas were devoting their highest attention on the human figures carved on the front side. This fact with respect to the beauty of the female figures was noticed even in ancient times showing that the art connoisseurs also were conscious of this supreme fact which has made the Kushāṇa art of Mathura such a loving object in the eyes of modern critics. "The Śālabhañjikā women carved on the vedikā pillars were standing in various graceful poses, well-supported (on crouchant figures), beautifully ornamented, wearing garments painted in various colours, and necklaces of various designs, slender-waisted, having round prominent breasts, eyes with red corners and black curly hair, standing under Aśoka trees and holding their distended boughs, stealing the hearts of the gods as it were with their rolling glances and teasing as it were with the play of their eyes." (Rāyapaseṇiyasutta[1]). We have actual specimens of both Buddhist and Jaina railings to which the above description equally applies. On the pillars of the Jaina Stūpa however there are no Jātaka scenes on the reverse. We learn from the Rāyapaseṇiyasutta that there were sixteen railing pillars (*solasa solasa sālabhañjiyāparivāḍī*) on each side of the *toraṇa* gateways which gives a total of sixty four pillars for the entire railing, a number which has actually been confirmed by the pillars of the Bharhut railing.

ŚĀLABHAÑJIKĀ—The term *śālabhañjikā* originally denoted a female sport implying the gathering of *śāla* flowers by women standing under blossoming *śāla* trees. This was a kind of garden sport which was popular in eastern India referred to as *prāchāṁ krīḍā* by Pāṇini (6.2.74). A graphic account of the *śālabhañjikā* festival is found in the Avadānaśataka which was undoubtedly based on a much earlier tradition. 'Once the Lord Buddha dwelt at Śrāvastī in the Jatvana, the garden of Anāthapiṇḍada. Now at that very time the festival called *śālabhañjikā* was being celebrated at Śrāvastī. Several hundred-thousands of beings assembled there and, having gathered śāla blossoms, they played, made merry and roamed about". And again quoting from the Nidānakathā the description of the *śālabhañjikā* festival celebrated in the Lumbinī

१. (तेसि णं दाराणं उभयो पासे दुहओ णिसीहियाए सोलस सोलस सालभंजियापरिवाडीओ पन्नत्ताओ) ताओ णं सालभंजियाओ लीलट्ठियाओ सुपइट्ठियाओ सुअलंकियाओ णाणाविहरागवसणाओ णाणामल्लपिणद्धाओ मुट्ठिगिच्झसुमज्झाओ आमेलगजमलजुयलवट्टियअब्भुण्णयपीणरइयसंठियपीवरपओहराओ रत्तावंगाओ असियकेसीओ मिउविसयपसत्थलक्खणसंवेल्लियग्गसिरयाओ ईसिं असोगवरपायवसमुट्ठियाओ वामहत्थग्गहियग्गसालाओ ईसिं अद्धच्छिकडक्खचिट्ठिएणं लूसमाणीओ विव चक्खुल्लोयणलेसेहिं अन्नमन्नं खेज्जमाणीओ, etc. Rājapraśniya Sūtra, Vaidya edn. p. 134.

garden : "Now between the two towns (Kapilavastu and Devadaha) there is an auspicious grove of śāla trees belonging to the people of both cities, and called Lumbinī grove. At that time from the roots to the topmost branches swarms of five-coloured bees, and flocks of birds of different kinds, roamed, warbling sweetly. The whole of Lumbinī Grove was like a wood of variegated creepers, or the well-decorated banqueting hall of some mighty king. The Queen beholding it was filled with the desire of disporting herself in the śāla grove (sālavanakīlaṁ kīlitu-kāmatā) ; and the attendants entered the wood with the Queen. When she came to the root of an auspicious *śāla* tree, she wanted to take hold of a branch of it. The branch, bending down, like a reed heated by steam, approached within reach of her hand. Stretching out her hand she took hold of the branch, and then her pains came upon her."

The motif of the woman plucking flowers from a distended bough is met with on the *toraṇa* of Bharhut and Sanchi in the Śuṅga period and is continued on the railing pillars of Mathura during the Kushāṇa period. It also appears in a limited number of examples in Gandhāra art of the Kushāṇa age, but the weak treatment of the subject there betrays its having been imported from the East. We have in the *Kāśikā* an example of a game played by people of the North known as *Jīva-putra-prachāyikā*. Vātsyāyana in the *Kāmasūtra* mentions as examples of *deśya krīḍās* (local sports) similar names ending in *aka* suffix, e. g. *Sahakāra-bhaṅjikā, Abhyūsha-khādikā, Udaka-kshveḍikā, Bisakhādikā, Aśokottaṁsikā, Pushpāvachāyikā, Chūta-latikā, Damanabhaṅjikā, Ikshubhaṅjikā,* etc.

In the classical literature two kinds of sports are often mentioned, viz. *Udyāna krīḍā* (garden sports), *salila-krīḍā* (water sports). The Mātaṅga Jātaka (4/376) describes how Diṭṭhamaṅgalikā the daughter of the rich merchant of Vārāṇasī used to go out with her female companions to celebrate the festival of *Udyana krīḍā*. According to the Uddālaka Jātaka the priest of the king of Vārāṇasī took his beloved to the outer gardens of the city for enjoying garden sports. Aśvaghosha, Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Māgha etc. have given vivid descriptions of such garden and water sports, showing that the tradition handed down from earlier times was much expanded in literature and art both of which were indebted to the realities of life.

The Mathura artists were called upon to reorganise the railing, in which work they displayed much originality, and a broad outlook, mainly introducing a variety of motifs based on female pastimes and sports known as *krīḍā-vihāra*. It was the popular belief that Indra in heaven enjoyed with his nymphs and this form of pleasure became archetypal for kings on earth. These festive celebrations were ordered by royalty and were comprised of the following items :—1. tree and garden sports (*udyāna-krīḍā*) ; 2. water sports (*udaka-krīḍā*) ; 3. adorning the body with unguents, clothes and orna-

ments (*gātra-maṇḍna*, including painting minute scroll designs on cheeks, forehead, chin etc., called as *viśeshaka-rachanā*) ; 4. drinking wine in company with female companions (*āpāna-goshṭhī*) ; 5. enjoying music to the accompaniment of lute (*vaṁśī*), flute (*vīṇā*) and drum (*mṛidaṅga*) ; 6. dance (*nṛitya*) which gave occasion to depict male and female figures in number of poses ; and 7. amorous enjoyments (*vilāsa* or *guhāvihāra*).

The Mathura railing pillars present a rich canvas of these scenes which are made permanent in stone as reflecting the joyous feeling and buoyancy of life in that age. For example quite a number of pillars show the ancient silvan deities (*vṛikshakas*) standing under *aśoka* trees, and gathering flowers (*pushpochchaya*). They represented in its complete form the *śalabhañjikā* and *aśoka pushpaprachayikā* motif (e. g. J. 55,2355,199,483, B 80).

The figures are shown standing on crouching dwarfs (*avāṅmukha guhyaka*) by which the artists wished to indicate that the older tradition of these female figures being Yakshīs was still accepted in popular belief. Sometimes the female figure is shown presenting flower basket or garlands to their male companions. An interesting new motif is that of *aśoka-dohada* in which a graceful young woman stands under an *aśoka* tree and bending low its branch with her left hand touches its stem with the left foot. (J. 55, 2345).

The scene evidently illustrates the belief referred to in old Indian poetry that an *aśoka* tree could be made to blossom when kicked by a maiden with her left foot. It recalls a scene described later by Kālidāsa in his drama Mālavikāgnimitra in which the king watches the young heroine while she performs a dance in honour of the Aśoka tree's blossing and touches it with her left foot.

A similar scene of *Aśoka dohada* is carved on an ivory plaque found at Begram or ancient Kapiśā. The head-dress in all these three figures is peculiar showing a spirally rolled scarf on the top of which hangs a braid of hair tied in a loop. It was this special hair style referred to by Aśvaghosha as *Śuklāṁśuka aṭṭālaka keśa* (Saundarananda 7. 7) or *Kokila keśapāśa* because of the upper black tuft of hair on the pile of white silk resembling the black bird seated on a tree of white flower.

The another motif is that of weaving heavy flower garlands and making a *śekhara* of the same. These were popular scenes of *Pushpochchaya, Pushpagrathana* and *Pushpābharaṇa,* i.e. floral amusements of which the artist made the fullest use.

The next round consisted of watery sports (*Jalakrīḍā, Ambhovihāra*). The literary descriptions include such items as mutual splashing of water (*Udakatāḍaṇa*), dishevelled hair by the striking of watery spurts (*keśākulamukhī*), wet drapery (*jalārdravasana,*) same as (*magnāṁśuka*), bathing in knee-deep water (*jānudeśabhugnā*), drawing the hair with back to the sun (*pṛishṭhakṛitādityā keśanistoyakāriṇī*), sitting

on the stone bench near the pond (*śilātalagatā*), embracing each other, sprinkling coloured water with syringes, swimming in the lotus pond, diving and searching each other amongst lotuses etc. The Mathura sculptors have shown great ingenuity in depicting the aquatic sports; for example, bathing scene under a waterfall carved on two pillars preserved in the Lucknow museum. Of these J 278 shows a female figure in three-quarters profile standing to right under a projecting precipice and receiving on her back a stream of water coming down in swift torrents and collecting below in a pond.

The next motif is that of a female figure standing against the stem of a tree and holding a large lotus flower in her hand. The lotus had prominent association with these sports. The motif is corresponding to the one described by Kālidāsa as *Līlā-kamala* held in the hand by sportive girls. In later Orrissan art the same was known as Padmagandhā i. e. a young woman smelling a lotus or holding it, whereas in western India she was known as *Padminī* or *Sugandhā*.

On a Mathura pillar a woman after bath is shown standing with her back to the visitor and drying her hair by squeezing out water from her locks the drops being swallowed by a Haṁsa. The motif is described in the Matsya Purāṇa as that of *Keśa-nistoyakāriṇī*, indicated above (cf. also *kabarī-niśchyotana* in Śṛiṅgāramañjarī of Bhoja), combined with it is a drinking scene in the balcony above. [Fig 134].

After bathing sports men and women adorned their bodies with sandal paste, unguents and ornaments of which there are several examples on railing pillars now preserved. In one case we see a standing female figure adjusting a pendant in her right ear with the aid of a mirror (J 5), the same motif as *Darpaṇā* in Orissan art.

Another motif in which women took great interest was their pastime with the parrots, the subject described elsewhere as *Śuka-sārikā*. It was both a domestic and garden sport. On pillar No. 99 are carved a male and a female figure in which the female is feeding a parrot with a fruit held in her left hand. Pillar fragment No. 115 is carved with the torso of the female figure on whose right shoulder is a parrot. Obviously she was engaged in feeding the bird with her left hand now lost. A female figure standing on the back of a dwarf is holding a fruit near her right ear and coaxing a parrot (Pillar No. 258). A scene depicted on pillar No. 1595 also. From the point of art best pillar is from Bhūteśvara railing in which the warm woman is holding a cage in her suspended right hand, and has a parrot on her left shoulder. On a pillar from Kankali Tila the parrot is seated on the girdle of a dancing young woman and is nibbling at the knot in order to unbind it. [Fig. 135].

There are some interesting scenes of ornamentation, e. g. pillar J 59 shows a woman with a long necklace, on pillar J 64 is the charming scene of a woman

standing under a tree under Śālabhañjikā pose and looking in a mirror. Another pillar is carved with two toileting scenes, in the upper one *Veṇī-prasādhana* in which the woman is looking in the mirror held in her right hand and is arranging her frontal hair with the left, her husband is standing behind her and dressing her long braid falling on the back and interweaving with a garland (*mālyagrathana*). The female attendant is carrying a garland in a tray (*mālya-chaṅgerī*). In the lower panel the woman has completed her toilet and is looking in a mirror. Pillar No. J 62 shows a female figure standing to the proper left with her back and right foot against the trunk of the tree and playing a harp with shell plastron (*vīṇā-vādana*). [Fig. 136].

Dancing also formed part of merriment scenes. In one figure No. 562 we see a young woman elegantly holding a scarf above her head. In the balcony above the artist has accommodated a scene of a Garuḍa seizing a Nāga. On more than half a dozen pillars we see a young woman unloosing her girdle or under-garment, a subject which is treated both in Śuṅga and Kushāṇa art. Probably she represented the *Mahā-nartakī*. It should be remembered that nudity now a common feature on these railing pillars was originally concealed by suitable painting. Kālidāsa has furnished sure indication that the female figures on pillars were once decorated with various paints[1]. The subject of some other pillars shows a youthful woman holding a sword (J63 & 2575, 152, J275, B 79, 278). In later art this subject was styled as Urvaśī or Menakā but the exact references in early art are wanting. Perhaps they were meant to depict amazonian guards in royal palaces. A theme which appeard to be somewhat uncommon, a delectable motif is that of a young girl engaged in *Kaṇḍuka krīḍā* or playing with a ball (J 61). Several pillars also show male and female donors standing with their hands in adoration (*añjali-mudrā*) and sometimes holding bunches of lotus flowers. These obviously represent the tradition of the figures of the donors carved on the sides of the doorways in the rock excavation. [Fig. 137].

At Mathura a stage had been reached when Buddhist figures were welcomed on the railing pillars. For example, we find the figures of standing Indra with his projecting head-dress and folded hands ; the Jātaka of Ṛishya-śṛiṅga (J 7) a faun-like figure of a well-built young man with a horny projection on the head ; but more specially figures of the Bodhisattva standing under a Pīpal tree or with a scalloped halo (*hasti-nakha-prabhā-maṇḍala*) (No. J 18), Buddha standing in *abhaya-mudrā* under a Pīpal with halo round the head (194). Working in the older tradition the artist could not ignore the Buddhist symbol and we actually find the Dharmachakra (438) and Bodhi-maṇḍa (464). One cannot miss the importance given to Yakshas and grotesque figures which have now been allotted a secondary place, as vehicles of beautiful young

1. *stambheshu yoshitpratiyātanānāmutkrāntavarṇakramadhūsarāṇāṃ* / Raghu. 16.17.

female figures but there are some scenes in which we find kneeling bearded Yakshas (205) and a corner railing with a couple of dwarfs. [Fig. 138].

In later literature these females are sometimes styled as *Alasa Kanyā* or *Alasā* whose special feature was the stretching of youthful limbs specially by throwing the arms above the head in a languid manner. This was an amorous pose of an indolent woman filled with intoxication of love and we find these poses on a couple of pillars in Mathura art (e. g. 196 & 977). A famous religious figure in Mathura art is that of the mother goddess Śrī-Lakshmī standing on a Pūrṇaghaṭa in the attitude of giving milk. This scene is also repeated on a railing pillar No. 286.

In the *Saundarananda* of Aśvaghosha particular reference is made to the painting of decorative designs with black *agaru* and sandal paste on the cheeks and face and we have actually on the Mathura pillar the representation of this subject (No. 257) (*Viśeshaka-rachanā*).

A favourite motif of *Krīḍā-Vihāra* was that of drinking scene (*āpāna-goshṭhī*) which has found a place on several pillars e. g. J 9 and 404 in which a woman shown standing under a tree holds a wine cup in her right hand as in Bacchanalian groups.

Another motif perfect in its aesthetic treatment is that of Mother and Child in which a young woman is holding a child in her lap or coaxing the boy with a rattle (J 16), styled as *Mātṛi-mūrti* in later Orissan art and *Putra-vallabhā* in the art of western India. In one case the female is carrying a pitcher on her head and wearing rustic dress. In Mathura art she would be the typical Gopikā but later on styled as Jayā with a *Kumbha* on head. On another pillar (148) she is shown carrying a incense burner placed on the shaft (*Daṇḍa-dīpa*). [Fig. 139].

It was natural that the Kushāṇa sculptors should find place on these railing pillars for Indo-Scythian men and women in worshipful attitude, the former being shown in Northern dress (*Udīchya veśa*) consisting of a conical cap, a long tied coat, trousers and thick boots (J 37, J 38. J 43).

It will thus appear that the railing round the Stūpas was planned by the Mathura artisans in a new context and unique richness of motifs seldom seen before. It was a rich creation of beauty, artistic variety and a real joy drawn from life. The railing had now reached its highest point of perfection both for its themes and artistic treatment.[1]

[1] After the Kushāṇa period by about the 4th century the railing receded into the background and in the Buddhist and Brāhmanical shrines that appeared in the Gupta period the railing had merged itself into high plinth, in an altered form but the motifs and the female figures on pillars had such a strong

Jaina Art of Mathura

Mathura was an ancient centre of Jainism, like the Brāhmaṇas and the Buddhists the Jainas also made it the seat of their religion. It appears that the Jaina community at Mathura was rich and influential as shown by the magnificent monuments left behind by them. Indeed the Jainas have manitained their holy traditions at Mathura up to this day.

The excavations at Kankali Tila yielded a number of sculptures and architectural pieces, which once belonged to the two Stūpas at that site. A very early Jaina Stūpa existed at Mathura which as we know from the inscriptions was called *Devanirmita Stūpa* (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. II, 20) may probably be assigned to the 3rd century B.C. An image of Arhat Nandyāvarta was installed in this Stūpa in the year 89 (=A. D. 167). The word *Devanirmita* points to an extremely early tradition attributing the Stūpa to a divine origin. It probably confirms the belief that the original Stūpa was made of gold and precious gems which was later on encased by larger Stūpas of bricks and stones. The brilliant description of the Vimāna of Sūryābhadeva in the Rāyapaseṇiya Sutta has recorded the tradition of an archetypal *devanirmita* Stūpa. Taranath records a tradition that the Mauryan monuments were believed to be the works of the Yakshas and that the art monuments of the preceding age were the works of the Devas. Although there is a mythical element in this description it does give some indication of the high antiquity of the original Jaina Stūpa. According to Jinaprabha Sūri it was believed that the ancient Stūpa was erected by Kuberā Yakshī in honour of the seventh pontiff Supārśva. At a later date the first Stūpa was encased in bricks in the time of the twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara Pārśvanātha. Thirteen hundred years after Mahāvīra Bappabhaṭṭa Sūri organised a restoration of the older Stūpa which seems to be confirmed by the post-Gupta and Gupta sculptures found here. It appears that there were more than

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hold on the minds of the people that they could not be eliminated and we find them transferred to the interior decoration of the Maṇḍapas in the royal palaces, where the poets like Kālidāsa and Bāṇa actually described them. Later on they were transferred to the exterior of the temples on their Śikharas and most of the motifs and poses described above are found in the temples of Khajuraho, Bhuvneshwer and western India. The Matsya Purāṇa mentions them as *Devarāmā* celestial women or Apasarsas, heavenly nymph and the same are translated in the later art as Devāṅganā, Deva-kanyā, Sura-sundarī, Madanikā, Prekshaṇikā, etc. accommodated on the Jaṅghā, Vitāna or Stambha or pillars of temples. In Orissan art we get a list of 16 Alasa Kanyās, e.g. Alasā, Mugdhā, Padmagandhā, Chāmarā, Guṇṭhanā, Nartanī, Śuka-sārikā, Nūpurapadikā, Mardalā, etc.

one restorations. The orginal Stūpa probably a small one was a mound of earth which concealed a miniature Stūpa of gold and gems. Later on, as the tradition says it was converted into a brick Stūpa. In the third stage the same was transformed into a stone Stūpa together with the addition of a large stone railing and gateways with a good deal of carving to give it the form of a lotus-railing, Padmavaravedikā, as described above on the basis of the actual art specimens and the description in the Rāyapaseṇiya Sutta.

We are informed of an interesting fact by the *Vyavahārasūtra-bhāshya* that the Buddhist wanted to encroach upon the Jaina Stūpa claiming it as their own but after six months of quarrel the king gave a decision in the favour of the Jaina Saṅgha. The fact seems to be that quite in proximity of the Jaina Stūpa almost across the road the Buddhists also built a Stūpa of their own at the site now called Bhūteśvara where a large number of Buddhist railing pillars have been found. Since in the earlier Jaina Stūpa which was intact at that time there were no images to show its religious affiliation, as we have seen above in the description of the *Padmavaravedikā*, the Buddhists laid claim to its possession but were thwarted in their attempt by royal intervention. In persuance of the art movement during the Kushāṇa period the Jaina community, however, seems to have decided to build a new Stūpa with the same kind of lithic sculptures on the railing pillars as was the style of the age and of which numerous specimens have been found.

A special feature of the second Jaina Stūpa is the discovery of numerous inscriptions dated in Kushāṇa era which give a detailed picture of the Jaina Saṅgha that is confirmed by the Kalpasūtra of Bhadrabāhu which points to the authentic nature of the Jaina accounts. We have already discussed the art evidence furnished by the numerous railing pillars which once formed part of the two Jaina Stūpa at Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā. Our attention is now drawn by the large number of images of Tīrthaṅkaras and other deities which must have belonged to the period of the Stūpa when shrines began to be made.

First in order come the beautiful Āyāgapaṭas or Tablets of Homage. The word *āyāga* is from Skt. Āryaka, meaning worshipful and is the same as in *āyaka-khambha* of the Nagarjunikonda Stūpa. These slabs were installed round the Stūpa to receive offerings and worship somewhat corresponding to the platforms for flower-offering known as *pupphādhāna* (Mahāvaṁsa 30.51,56) or *pushpagrahaṇī vedikā* (Saddharma-puṇḍarīka, 239.3[1]). Ayāgapaṭa No. J. 555 (Smith, *Jaina Stūpa*, pl. XX) actually illustrates their position round the Stūpa where worshippers are offering flowers heaped on these platforms. Sixteen of them were installed round a stūpa

1. Edgerton, *BHSD.*, p. 418, who translates incorrectly.

four in each direction as can be gathered from the Mathura figure. In the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka inscription from Gosuṇḍī there is mention of a *pūjā-śilā* which corresponds to an *āyāga-paṭa*. There are references to *puhumī śila-paṭṭa* in early Jaina Āgamas (Aupapātika Sūtra, 5) indicating that originally such slabs for worshipping the deity were made of clay. The Jaina *āyāgapaṭas* are thing of joy and beauty with perfect workmanship. They illustrate the continuity of symbol worship amongst the Jainas and also the introduction of image worship as combined with the symbols.

The strong belief in the significance of symbols and powerful influence which the symbols exercised on religious worship are made manifest on these Āyāgapaṭa as nowhere else. They belong to a transitional period when symbols were as much meaningful as the Tīrthaṅkara image and the two were equally balanced inharmony with each other.

The first place may be given to a slab (J 248, Smith, pl. VIII) which is based entirely on the conception of symbols. It is a *chakrapaṭṭa* showing a sixteen spoked chakra in the centre surrounded by three bands ; the first one showing sixteen *triratna* symbols, second one eight maidens of space (*ashṭadikkumārikā*) floating in the air and offering garlands and lotuses and the third showing a coiled heavy garland, and in the four corners supported by atlantes, figures of tritans (*mahoraga*) round a square framing in which on the four sides were shown four religious symbols like *śrīvatsa*, *triratna*, etc. each worshipped by a pair of human figures, male and female, having wings and hind parts of lions. [Fig. 140].

The next stage is shown by another *āyāgapaṭa* known as *Svastikapaṭṭa* (Pkt. *Sotthiyapaṭṭa*) so called owing to the presence of a conspicuous *svastika* motif disposed round the figure of a seated Tīrthaṅkara under a *chhatra* in the central medallion encircled by four *triratna* symbols. Inside the four arms of the *svastika* again are auspicious symbols, viz. *mīna-mithuna* (pair of fish), *vaijayantī* (triangle-headed-standard), *svastika* and *śrīvatsa*. In the outer circular band are depicted four auspicious symbols, viz. *bodhi* tree in railing, Stūpa, a defaced object and a Tīrthaṅkara being worshipped by 16 vidyādhara couples. In the four corners are *mahoraga* figures in atlantic attitude, one side of the outer square frame has been widened to find place for a row of eight auspicious signs a *svastika*, a fish, a *śrīvatsa*. [Fig. 141]. The *chakrapaṭṭa* and *svastikapaṭṭa* were also carved in the Buddhist art at Amaravati. The former mentioned in a pillar inscription (*chakrapaṭa*, No, 1253 Lüder's list) and the latter (*sothikapaṭa*) in inscription No. 1287 of Amaravati (Lüder's list). A third kind of *āyāgapaṭas* were named as *chaityapaṭas* of which two specimens have been found among Mathura āyāgapaṭas; No. J 255 in the Lucknow museum showing a Stūpa with a sopāna toraṇavedikā, two side pillars, *śālabhañjikā* figures and an elongated Stūpa or chaitya after which the name

was derived. Strangely enough we also have a Buddhist chaitya slab *chetiyapaṭa* at Amaravati (Luder's list Insc. no. 1225) which records the gift of two chaitya slabs as at Mathura.

The other *chaityapaṭṭa* from Mathura is no Q. 2 in the Mathura museum of which the exact place of origin is not certain but which was installed in a Devakula of Nirgrantha Arhats and hence in all probability belonged to the Jain sanctuality of Kaṅkālītīlā. On this slab (height 2'.4", width 1' $9\frac{3}{4}$") is carved a Stūpa or Chaitya surrounded by a railing and an ornamented gateway approached by means of the flight of steps. The Stūpa is flanked by two pillars, the one topped by a wheel (*chakradhvaja* and the other by a sejant lion (*siṁhadhvaja*). On each side of the Stūpa are two flying naked munis, two suparṇas and two *śālabhañjikā* figures. On each side of the stair-case is an arched niche containing a human figure representing the male and female donors. It may thus appear that the artists at Amaravati were indebted to Mathura which supplied them the prototype of these slabs.

From the point of view of art the highest place is taken by the *āyāgapaṭa* J 249 (Lucknow) set up by Siṁhanādika for the worship of the Arhat which is organised as a *Tīrthaṅkara-paṭṭa* showing the Jina seated in *padmāsana* in the central medallion enclosed by four *triratnas*. Its outer frame is conceived with rows of Eight Auspicious Signs (*Aṣhṭamāṅgalika chihna*) which have now become standardised as the group of eight : *mīna-mithuna, devagriha, śrīvatsa, ratnapātra*, above ; below *triratna, pushpasraka, vaijayantī* and *pūrṇaghaṭa*. On one side is a *chakradhvaja* and on the other a *hastidhvaja* both of which are placed on the top of lion capitals consisting of four winged lions. [Fig. 142]. Another *āyāgapaṭṭa* (J 252 gift of Achalā) is of similar design but with some difference in the number and form of the auspicious symbols. The *chakradhvaja* is common to both but the elephant-topped pillar of the former gives place to a *siṁhadhvaja* in the latter, which, however, is much defaced. According to the Mahāvaṁsa there were 16 such slabs or tablets out of which about 12 have been found from the Kankali Tila Stūpa, a number very nearly confirming the ideal number.

Several other notable sculptures peculiar to the Jainas include a bas-relief depicting Āryāvatī, attended by the female attendants holding a fly-whisk and an umbrella, established in the year 42 of Shodāśa ; a bas-relief of Naigamesha the deity presiding over child-birth who as Naigameya formed part of the cult of Kārttikeya ; and Sarasvatī holding right hand in *abhayamudrā* and a manuscript in left hand dated Saṁvat 54 ; all three being iconographic novelties presented by Jainas of Mathura.

Tīrthaṅkara Images

The sculptures from the second Jaina Stūpa of Kankali Tila show a good number of Tīrthaṅkara images dated from Kushāṇa year 5 to 95. They are of four

kinds (1) standing images in *Kāyotsarga mudrā* in which nudity is clearly indicated; (2) seated images in *Padmāsana*; (3) *Pratimā sarvatobhadrikā* or four-fold images in standing posture and (4) the same in seated posture. In Mathura art of the Kushāṇa period we do not find the distinctive signs (*lāñchchhana*) of the Tīrthaṅkaras excepting in the case of Adinātha or Ṛishabhanātha who has a couple of loose locks falling on shoulder and Supārśvanātha marked by a canopy of serpent hoods. On the pedestal of these images we find the figures of lions and a *Dharmachakra* in front. Generally we find the Śrāvaka householders including men, women and children depicted as worshippers. From the point of view of art these images are rather stiff as required by their contemplative mood (*samādhi*) and austere penance (*tapas*). Even then in a couple of images of the Gupta period there is some degree of relaxation, in the pose and beauty, and the decorative motif. There is however an image of Mahāvīra seated in *utthita padmāsana* (G 1. Mathura meuseum) having a lotus halo behined the head and hair arranged in short schematic curls in which austere stiffness has given place to subtle grace and a divine effulgence on the face. It should however be noted that those very artists when engaged on carving the railing pillars showed themselves equal to experienced masters in the delineation of the human form and the rendering of the difficult poses. [Figs. 143-4]. The variety of scenes on the railing pillars has already been marked and their aesthetic quality has also been noted. The groups of householders on the pedestals and specially on the tympanum (No. J555 Lucknow Museum) are possessed of great charm. The latter showing an exceptional mastery of composition and figure carving. In lunate arches of the three tympana found at Mathura the one from Kankali Tila is in excellent taste like the best of the *āyāgapaṭṭas*.

The Tīrthaṅkara images are distingnished by the Śrīvatsa symbol in the centre of the chest and haloes round their head except where there is a canopy of Nāga hoods. On the pedestals we see either a *chakra* either alone or placed on pillar or a seated Jina or a lion figure. In some cases the name of the Tīrthaṅkara is mentioned e.g. pedestal No. 490 stating it to be *Vardhamāna pratimā* dated in the year 84 of Kushāṇa era. It should be noted that the *śrīvatsa* symbol is found only on Jaina images and never on Buddha images. The Jainas had adopted quite early the *śrīvatsa* as their distinctive sign as we find it in the beginning of the Hāthīgumphā inscription of Khāravela. In seated Tīrthaṅkara figures we find only one *mudrā*, viz. *dhyāna mudrā*.

The Jaina community of Mathura was interested in particular kind of *vyūha* worship as shown by a number of conjoint fourfold images, *pratimā sarvatobhadrikā* (inscriptions, Smith, p. 46-7), the four pontiffs selected for this purpose being Ṛishabhanātha the first, Supārśva the Seventh with a canopy of serpent hoods, Pārśvanātha the Twenty-third and Mahāvīra the Twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara.

Origin of the Buddha Image :

The question of the origin of the Buddha image is a significant one from the stand-point of religious and art history. The emergence of the Buddha image was the outcome of long drawn preceding movement of devotional theism or *Bhakti*. The image was not an isolated event which happended all of a sudden without its predisposing causes. Opinions have differed as to the place of origin of the Buddha image whether in the Gandhāra school or in the Mathura school of sculpture. This question must be examined independently against the background of religious history and secondly with reference to the various elements of Buddhist iconography as they can be explained in the context of India's religious and art symbolism.

Let us take the religious background first. There can be no image unless there is a definite religious movement advocating the worship of the image. The evidence from inscriptions and sculptures found at Mathura and in the adjoining centres is abundant on this point. In the first century B. C. we have inscriptional evidence of the *Bhakti* cult of Vāsudeva amongst the Bhāgavatas prevalent in Mathura which inspired the followers of Buddhism. On a lintel fragment of the reign of Mahākshatrapa Shodāsa there is mention of the Mahāsthāna of the gods Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva. In another inscription found at Mora and also belonging to the reign of Shodāsa (1st century B.C.) there is clear reference to a shrine dedicated to the Five Heroes of the Vṛishṇīs (*Vṛishṇīnāṁ pañchavīrāṇām*). According to the Vāyu Purāṇa Vṛishṇi heroes were Balarāma, Kṛishṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba. In the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka inscription found at the ancient site of *Majhamikā* (*Mādhyamikā*, modern Nagari near Chittor) reference is made to god Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva who were given the title of Bhagavān and also spoken of as *Sarveśvara*, i. e. pre-eminent among all deities. In the Besnagar inscription of Heliodoros there is reference to the Bhāgavata *Bhakti* cult and for the worship of Bhagavān Vāsudeva a shrine was also discovered during the excavation. This evidence proves beyond doubt that Mathura was the nucleus of a circle of the Bhāgavata movement whose radius covered an area of about 200 miles towards the southwest and southeast. In the region of Mathura itself several images of Balarāma have been found pointing to a cult of *Bhakti* to Balarāma as a deity. Special mention should be made of an image of Balarāma found at the village of Junsuṭi about six miles from Mathura which on stylistic ground should be assigned to about the late second century B.C. [Fig 145]. We may also point to the representation of the various Brāhmanical deities like Indra, Agni, Vishṇu, Śiva, Bhūmi (the earth goddess) and even stars like *Phālguni* on the Panchala coins of Ahichchhatrā.

All this evidence indicates that the emergence of the Buddha image was the outcome of a movement amongst the Buddhists for worshipping the Master in a human

form in response to the same religious impulse as characterised the followers of the Bhāgavata cult. When the Vaishṇavas developed a psychological background and a religious emotion suitable for image worship the Buddhist could not long remain unaffected. They felt the need of a visual human symbol to whom they could pay homage and religious worship. This culminated in the representation of the Buddha in an anthropomorphic form.

Even in Buddhism the urge to render devotional worship to Buddha had existed long before the actual making of image but then he was represented by means of symbol. For example, instead of making the human image the artists depicted him in the form of some symbols well known like the Bodhi-vṛiksha, Dharma-chakra, Stūpa, Triratna, Chūḍā (head-dress), Bhikshā-pātra (Alm bowl) etc. Religious authority was clear in this matter, viz., that devotional worship in the manner of the *Bhakti* cult, could be offered to the Buddha depicted in a symbolical form but there was no sanction to make the image. Some great decision was required to get over this interdiction. The formulation and execution of image were significant problems which could only be disposed of at a very high level. It was not a question to be summarily settled by the ingenuity of some local artists working either in Mathura or in Gandhāra as some scholars have suggested. We may clarify the position in greater relief with reference to what happens within the orbit of those religious denominations who are opposed to image worship, e. g. Islam or Āryasamāja. These religious orders are definitely opposed to the making and worship of images and none of their followers will touch it with a pair of tongs nor is it possible to find a single image in any of their religious places. A similar situation must be envisaged in the early history of Buddhism.

Of the hundreds and thousands of Buddha images found at Mathura, in Gandhāra and in other places not one antedates the reign of Kanishka. Confused suggestions have been made as to the existence of a Buddha-like figure on the coins of Vema Kadphises, or Azes, or Maues. But none of them stands critical scrutiny and none of them has the value of a proven hypothesis. We have therefore ultimately to fall back upon the firm position that the earliest Buddha images are those that bear dates in the reign of Kanishka. Wheeler also writes, "It is a point on which most authorities agreed that the palmy days of Buddhism and Buddhist art coincide with the reign of the great Kushāṇa kings, and more specially with that of Kanishka."

When we examine the archaeological evidence we find that most important dated image is one found at Sarnath, viz. the colossal standing Bodhisattva dated in the third year of Kanishka and dedicated by Bhikshu Bala of Mathura. After the discovery of this particular image another one, dated in the second year of Kanishka, and made of the same kind of Mathura red sand-stone, was found at Kauśāmbī.

Subsequent to these two images may be arranged a large number of dated images in several other years of the reign of Kanishka and his successors, viz. Vāsishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva.

When we look to the productions of the Gandhāra School we find a different story. We have no evidence up to now of the spread of any Bhakti cult in the area round about Taxila and Peshavar. About the images of this school Sir John Marshall has observed, "No one of the thousands of known images bears a date in any known era."

As against the religious prohibition against the making of the Buddha image, it may be imagined that the Buddhists coming under the influence of the Bhāgavata movement of image-worship and temple-building had been wishing for some time past to depict the Buddha in human form. The force of the traditional prohibition was very strong and no one would dare easily transgress it. Therefore in the earliest stages of it to begin with a decision on the part of the highest patron of the faith was required in the matter. Archaeological evidence points to the fact that such a forward step was taken by Kanishka. Secondly in the beginning it was not the image of the Buddha but that of the Bodhisattva with which they started, and in which it was considered that no or the least violence to the belief or scriptures was involved.

The natural inference is that up to the time of Kanishka's coming to the throne the tradition of not representing Buddha in human form was strictly observed. To break this convention there was need for a supreme decision at the highest level. Public opinion must have been raged for some long time past itself on the side of those who wanted to see the Buddha depicted in human form. In the context of the Mahāyāna thought such an urge on the part of the people must have been a very natural one and can be understood easily. The arrival of Kanishka on the scene with his far-flung authority and particular religious attitude was a significant event in a history of not only Buddhism but also Zoroastrism. He was responsible for the supreme decision in regard to the representation of a vast and varied pantheon on his coins. In the reign of his predecessor Vema Kadphises only the figure of Śiva with his Nandī was depicted on the imperial coinage. Kanishka decided that the figures of the Zoroastrian deities (Yazatas whose number is 27) should be represented on his coins. It seems to be a natural corollary to this decision, that Kanishka should have thought of including the Greek, the Brāhmanical and Buddhist pantheons also in his scheme of religion. So far as Brāhmanism was concerned he continued to include the figure of Śiva on his coins under the name of *Oesho*. As regards Buddhism it quite fits into this context that Buddha was selected as the most suitable representative figure in Buddhism to be adopted on the coins.

There was, of course, the age-old interdiction against the depicting of the Buddha in human form. Very naturally such a position could not be maintained any longer in the face of the emperor's decision to broaden the scope of the religious motifs to be adopted on the coins which was an exclusive royal prerogative. None can argue that the decision to depict the Iranian deities came from any other authority except that of the emperor and the same should be conceded as an undoubted fact for the image of *BODDO* on Kanishka coins. The convention regarding the representation of the Buddha through symbols was then relegated to the background. And, thus the way was thrown open for the representation of the Buddha in human form. Why the Buddha figure was not carved before the time of Kanishka should not be attributed to any want of capacity on the part of the sculptors. As the available statuary shows that the Mathura artists were quite competent to fashion the statues of gods and men in any shape of form. Something else was restraining them so far as the Buddha image was concerned. The urge of the people to see Buddha in a concrete shape could no longer be satisfied with the mere sight of symbols but demanded to visualise the Master in all his resplendent glory as the *Mahāpurusha* whose body was radiant with 32 marks (*dvātriṁśata-mahāpurusha-lakshaṇa*). Such seems to be the whole position with regard to the origin of the Buddha image. This explains the emergence of the image in its full context of religious, social, political and art conditions. All of which became integrated in the new creation of the Buddha image. It cannot be accepted for a moment that the creation of the Buddha image would be the result of the vague caprice of an unknown artist in the Gandhāra school. It may be specially observed that none of the three factors in relation to the Buddha image existed in Gandhāra, e.g. there was no background of any Bhakti movement there as has been shown above for Mathura, secondly no representation of the Buddha on any coins or sculpture has been preserved prior to Kanishka in the Gandhara school, and thirdly none of those elements which contribute to the making of the Buddha image by combining Chakravartī and Yogī ideals had any meaning or background in the Hellenistic tradition in Gandhāra. To become acceptable to the people for whom such images were meant, the Buddha statue could only be the fruit of a purposeful design intended to satisfy the needs of a religious aspiration of the people in the form of the *Bhakti* discipline which was now an established fact at Mathura. The Brāhmanical sculptures and the images of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara and, of course, also the figures of Greek and Iranian gods and goddesses on the coins were there but none of them would be complete and ideal for the representation of the Buddha. If we analyse the various elements of the Buddha's iconography we have to fall back not on one single image type but generally on the whole statuary that had been evolved during the course of centuries up to about the first century A.D. To trace

the complete formula of the Buddha image to its various sources alone can furnish an adequate answer to the much debated problem of the origins of the Buddha image.

Buddha images may be divided into two principal types, viz. standing and seated. These types are distinctly different in artistic conception from each other. Whatever be the source of these two main types from the point of view of art, when we take into account the elements of the Buddhist iconography we find that both are outcome of the single iconographic formula which was basically conceived as combining the ideal of a Chakravartī and the ideal of a Yogī. Buddha as well as Mahāpurusha was endowed with the thirty-two marks of the great man. These lent themselves easily to the iconographic conception of the Buddha figure. For example, the hump of wisdom on the top of the head called *Ushṇīsha*, spiral hair between the two eyebrows called *ūrṇā*, elongated ear-lobes (*pralamba-karṇa-pāsha*), long arms up to the knees (*Ājānubāhu*), broad chest (*viśālavaksha*), palms of the hands and soles of feet marked with the Dharma-chakra (*chakrāṅka-hastapādau*), webbed fingers of the hands (*jālāṅguli-kara*) etc..[1] All these features are present in the human image of the Buddha and directly based on Indian tradition of an Ideal Great Man. Then there are certain features contributed by the *Yogī* ideal of the Buddha figure, e.g. the gaze fixed on the tip of the nose resulting in the half-closed eyes (*nāsāgra-dṛishṭi*), cross-legged posture (*padmāsana* or *dhyānamudrā*) with hands either placed in the lap or the right-hand raised to shoulder (*abhayamudrā*) etc. The conception of a Chakravartī also was responsible for some of the elements in the making of the Buddhist iconography, e.g. the two chaurie-bearer attendants who were invariably associated with royalty. The *chhatra* also was an indispensable symbol for royalty as seen in the Sarnath image of Bhikshu Bala and in the case of the Maholī Bodhisattva. They accepted halo round the head as the suitable sign of the glory of the Buddha. The conception of the halo was borrowed from Zoroastrian deities on coins, round whose head it depicted the divine glory hvarr (Skt. *svara-maṇḍala*) of Ahura Mazda. The Kushāṇa artists who were also called upon to represent the figures of the Iranian Yazatas (deities) on the coins of Kanishka obviosly drew upon the original figures of Ahura Majda for the halo. The idea fitted very well with Indian conception of the divine figures being surrounded by a radiant orb (*prabhāmaṇḍala*) ; although no earlier representation of this feature can be traced at Sanchi or Bharhut. Gradually the halo became Indianised. Its Iranian origin was forgotten and during the Gupta period it was believed that the halo represented the shadow of the *chhatra* held on the head of the king. Kālidāsa mentions this conception in case of Raghu and Pārvatī. It suited very well the form

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१. चक्राङ्कपादं स ततो महर्षिर्जलावनद्धाङ्गुलिपाणिपादम् ।
सोर्णभ्रुवं वारणवस्तिकेशं सविस्मयं राजसुतं ददर्श ॥७०॥

Buddhacharita of Aśvaghosha, 1. 60.

of the halo in the Gupta period which was now decorated as the blooming lotus with open petals and therefore known as *padmātapatra prabhā-maṇḍala* (halo of the form of lotus parasol).

The genesis of the Buddha image should be traced to the religious attitued that had been evolved amongst the various Buddhist sects as we know from the religious history of Buddhism. The followers of the Sarvāstivādī sect were in the ascendency at Mathura and also in Gandhāra. They were realists who believed in the value of the worldly ideas in the service of humanity and selfless action for the relief of human suffering and sorrow. It means that they placed higher value on the ideal of the Bodhisattvahood so much so that they declared that lord Avalokiteśvara would condescend to go to the Avīchī hell if he could make man happy by his presence there. This was a very powerful point of view which stirred deeply the feelings and emotions of all who listened to the new ideal. It appears that the Buddhists were divided into two camps, the traditionalists or Thervādins who were adherents of the Nirvāṇa ideal, viz. attaining Nirvāṇa by following the ascetic path ; there were others the Sarvāstivādins who did not withdraw from the exacting struggle of the world but took utmost joy in sacrificing themselves for the happiness of all beings. This was in essence the ideal of the Bodhisattvahood in the palmy days of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Bodhisattva ideal proved as of supreme attraction and it provided a new inspiration of positive service and devotion and endowed with social virtues and conscience. The effect of this bifurcated attitude was best seen in the case of the Buddha image. The followers of the Buddha ideal continued with their old restrictions on the image of the Buddha and most probably they confined themselves to the continuation of symbolical representation of the Master as was known in the art of Sanchi and Bharhut. On the other hand the Sarvāstivādin monks were getting more dynamic and powerful spreading of their activities from Taxila to Mathura and declaring fearlessly their faith in the tangible worship of the Buddha in a human from, for then the image was as real an element of religious worship as faith in the doctrine. We, therefore, find the earliest images were those not of the Buddha but of Bodhisattva which agreed with the Sarvāstivādin ideal.

The word Bodhisattva literally means one who is destined or worthy of attaining the *Bodhi* or enlightenment, i. e. a being on the path of *Sambodhi*. The Buddha himself was a Bodhisattva up to the age of thirty-five years, i. e. before his enlightenment at Bodhgaya. After the great enlightenment he became entitled to the epithet Buddha i. e. 'the Enlightened One.' The first part of his life of thirty-five years is also divided into two portions, viz. his palace life as a prince up to the age of twenty-nine when he was dressing himself in the robes and ornaments worthy of royalty, and when he became a recluse at the age of twenty-nine he gave up his

Fig. 139 c

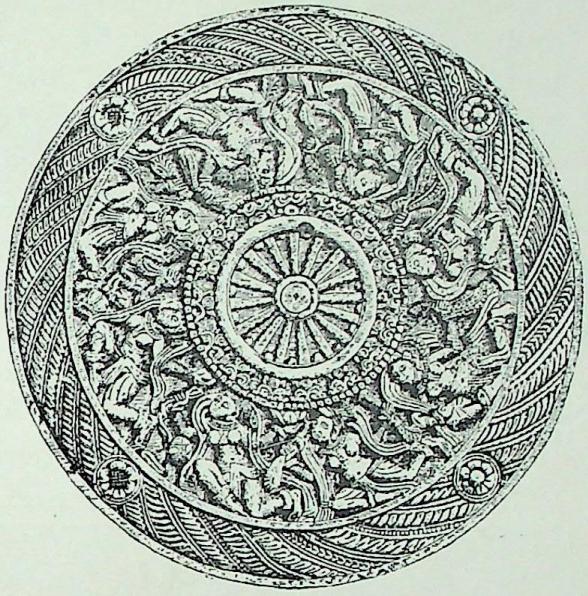


Fig. 140

Fig. 139 d

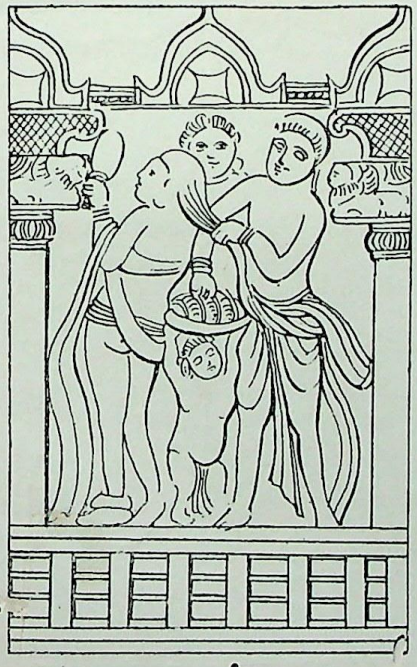


Fig. 139 g

Fig. 138 a

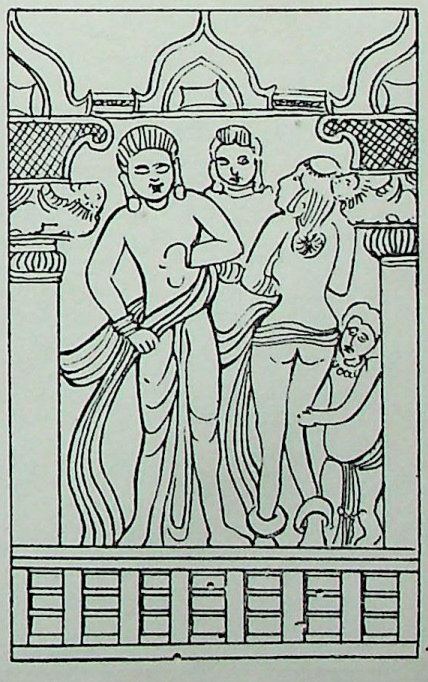


Fig. 139 h

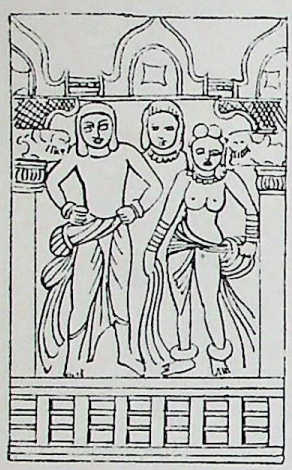


Fig. 139 e

Fig. 143

Fig. 139 f

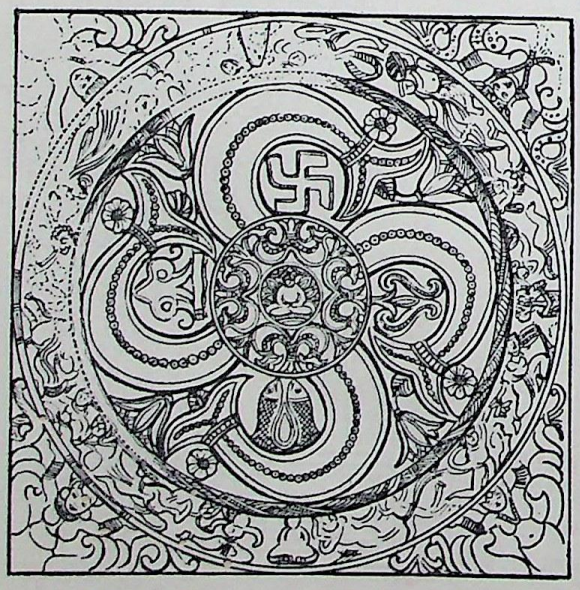


Fig. 141

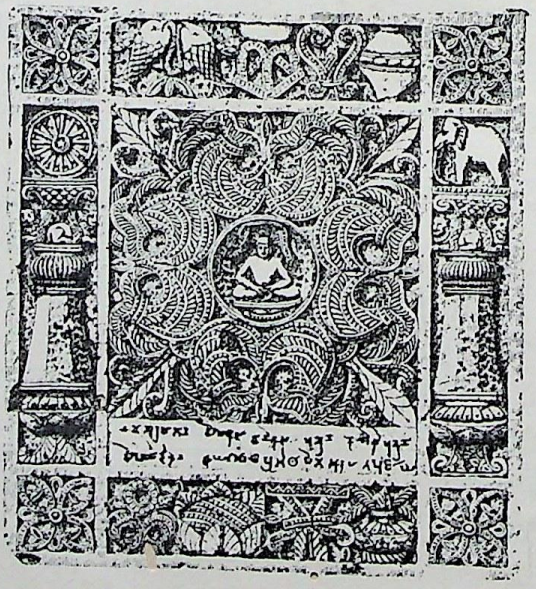


Fig. 142

Fig. 144

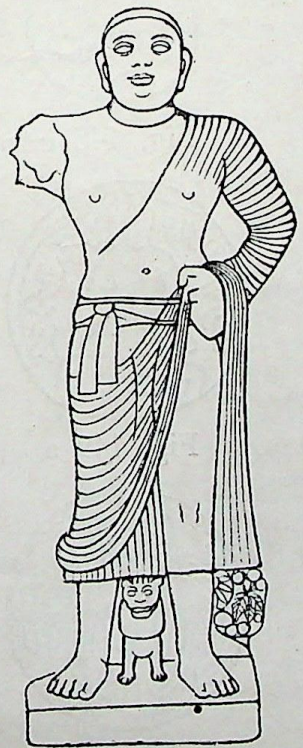


Fig. 146 a

Fig. 145

Fig. 146 b

Fig. 147

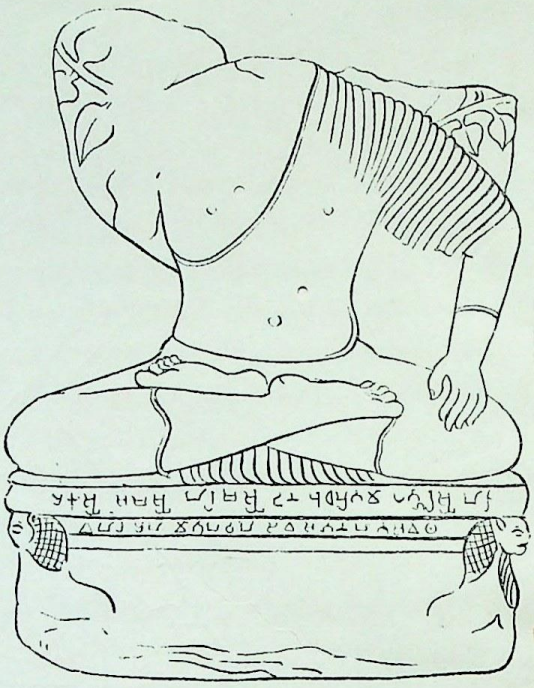


Fig. 147 a

Fig. 148 a

Fig. 148 b

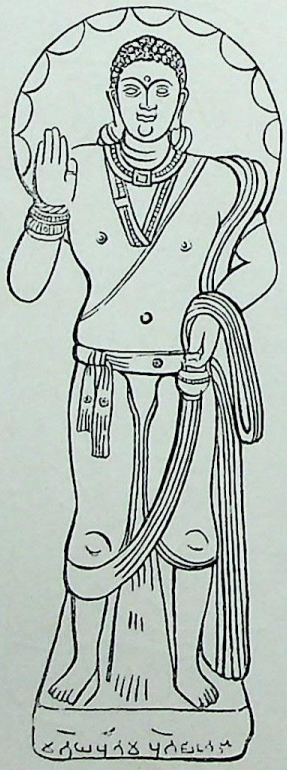


Fig. 149 x

Fig. 148 c

Fig. 149 a

Fig. 149 b

costly dress and jewels and donned the *trichīvara*. The question which must have presented before the monks and the artists alike was whether the Buddha should be represented with or without royal dress. Here the evidence of the earliest sculptures is of value to us. The several early sculptures in the Mathura school throw significant light on this point. Whether they are standing images of muscular built and big size as the Sarnath Bodhisattva of the year three of Kanishka or the Maholī Bodhisattva, or slender seated type like the Katra Bodhisattva and Anyor Bodhisattva (both of which are undated but by the consensus of opinion of all scholars are among the earliest images made in Mathura school). [Figs. 146-7]. We find that it is the later phase of Gautama as Bodhisattva wearing monk's dress that was accepted for representation. It may be imagined that after sometime the urge to represent the Buddha in human form also must have become irresistible then it was found necessary to reorient the two types of images, the one without ornaments was chosen for that of the Buddha and the other with ornaments and royal dress became the type of the Bodhisattva image. When the artists were called upon to evolve a formula of the Buddha image they were not without a precedent, in the form of earlier examples of divine images.

First in importance come the Yaksha images of the colossal standing type like that of Parkham. The Parkham Yaksha is rightly spoken of as the grand ancestor of all early Indian statuary. The standing Bodhisattva type was directly indebted to it. Both are freestanding and carved in the round, both of a colossal size, both have a muscular built, both impressive by their sheer volume, in both the divine chatacter of the image is sought to be conveyed by means of its size and dominant physical force. Both have their right hand held in *abhayamudrā*. In both the drapery is of simple character, consisting of a *dhotī*, a girdle and an upper covering (*uttarīya*) passing on the left shoulder (*Ekāṁsika*). As Coomaraswamy has shown in his famous essay on 'the origin of the Buddha image' the colossal standing Bodhisattvas in the Mathura school were undoubtedly derived from the Parkham Yaksha type. Stylistically there is a closest resemblance between the Parkham Yaksha and the Sarnath Bodhisattva which are parts of the same art cycle.

It has been sometimes pointed out that the Buddha figure is represented on the coins of Maues, Azes or Vema Kadphises but none of these is free from doubt. The very poses of their hands indicate that they were hardly intended to represent the figure of the Buddha. For example, on the coins of Azes the figure has its right hand stretched horizontally outwards which is against any possible *mudrā* of the hands of the Buddha image. In the lap of the figure also there is a staff placed parallel to folded legs and projecting outwards which is meaningless in the case of a Buddha figure. In the case of the coins of Maues there is a similar object and the posture of

the legs can hardly be said to be a true *Padmāsana*. The figure on the coins of Kadphises is very distinct and can in no way be said to be that of the Buddha. It holds in the uplifted right hand a full-blown lotus with a long stalk, a feature not found in any of the early Buddha images. Moreover none of these three figures seems to have had a halo round the head which was an invariable feature of all Buddha images as we see on the coins of Kanishka. [Figs. 148-9].

We should also, while considering the formula of Buddha images, have a look back into Maurya-Śunga art in quest of the various elements constituting the images in order to find out whether any of them was recognised as such in the early Buddhist art prior to Kushāṇa period. While the standing Bodhisattva was modelled after the standing Yakshas the seated type of the earliest Bodhisattvas like Katra and Anyor requires to be traced. Our attention is directed to the Aśokan Lion-capital of the Sarnath pillar. We find here a Dharmachakra as the topmost symbol surmounting the heads of the four lions. In this case it is possible to recognise the presence of the Buddha in the form of Dharmachakra, the four lions represent the lion-seat or *Siṁhāsana*. The lion seat stands for the Chakravartī aspect of his dominant personality. The symbolism of the Lion-capital clearly stands for the combination of the Yogī and the Chakravartī ideals which inspired the religionists and artists in formulating the personality of the Buddha. If we compare the Lion-capital and the Katra Bodhisattva image we find them to be the products of a single formula with only a slight modification. The Dharmachakra is replaced by the actual human figure of the Buddha holding his hand in *abhayamudrā* and the four lions carved in the round are replaced by the royal throne supported on the heads of two or three lion figures carved in relief. The search for the formula for the Buddha image must have been a very intensive one and the religious teachers as well as the artists must have gone all out with their resources both in the matter of traditional motifs and representations as well as religious traditions and beliefs in order to perfect an iconographic from which would be acceptable to all. The type of image that we find in the shape of the Katra Bodhisattva at Mathura does represent a synthesis and commingling of several strands that were available in the eclectic religious atmosphere of Mathura.

An analysis of the Katra Bodhisattva acquints us with the following features :-

(1) Buddha seated on lion-throne under a bodhi tree which gives a realistic touch to the presentation of the Master shown as he would have been in actual life.

(2) Seated in Padmāsana, with two legs crossed, which was a typical yogic posture, known from earlier times in Indian art and religion.

(3) The right hand is held in abhaya-mudrā and left hand placed on the left leg. This is an adaptation of the pose of hands, already seen in Yaksha images. The abhayamudrā is also entirely an Indian conception.

(4) The hands and feet are marked with Dharmachakra and triratna symbols. They form part of the conception of an ideal superman.

(5) On the top of the head, Ushṇīsha or raised spiral locks of hair (*kaparda*) which are believed to have left over on the Buddha's head when he cut off his hair. The hair on the head does not show any curve, as is the case in all images of Gandhāra school. This types of hair has been called as that of a monk with a shaven head. There is an Ūrṇā between the eye-brows a circular small whorl of hair.

(6) There is behind the head a plain undecorated halo with a scalloped margin.

(7) The drapery consists of a cloth fastened by a girdle as in the case of early Yaksha figures. The bust is covered with a saṁghāṭī which leaves the right shoulder bare. Only a few folds are shown on the left arm and the shoulder.

(8) Buddha is attended by a chowri-bearer on either side. These chowri-bearers are dressed like the householders. They can not yet be identified as Indra and Brahmā or Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya.

(9) In the upper two corners are shown flying Devas, throwing flowers on the Buddha. [Fig. 148].

Each one of the above features, perhaps with the only exception of the halo, is derived from Indian religious conceptions, associated with a Yogī or Chakravartī in general and the Buddha in particular.

In the early iconography, in case of the standing figures a *chhatra* or parasol is shown over the Buddha's head, which also was included in the paraphernalia of the Chakravartī. The feature of the two chowries and the *chhatra* was already the sign of royalty in early art as seen at Bharhut, in the figure of Māndhātā at Bhājā and at Sanchi. The formula of Buddha's image seems to have evolved by combination of the ideal Yogī seated in meditation and the ideal Chakravartī seated on a *siṁhāsana* with two chowri-bearer attendants with a *chhatra* held above. In the case of the seated figures, the *chhatra* seems to have been replaced by the halo.

The presence of the *Bodhimaṇḍa* or raised platform on which the Buddha was seated at Bodhgaya at the time of his enlightenment was accepted without question. It was easily transformed into a raised *siṁhāsama* borrowed from the Chakravarti iconography. From the outset the Buddha was believed to be a lion amongst the Śākyas, Śākyasiṁha, who was destined to sit on a lion-throne and, therefore, this

association of a *siṁhāsana* with his image was taken to be appropriate. This formula of Buddha's image being seated on a lion-throne—supported on the heads of the four-lions—is not necessarily borrowed from anywhere else or even invented in the Kushāṇa period. As a matter of fact, this formula of lione-throne consisting of four lions and supporting the symbolic form of the Buddha is alrealy present in the most explicit form in the Sarnath lion capital. In the later case, four lions seated back to back supported a Dharmachakra which symbolised the Dharmakāya of the Buddha or which is the same thing as Buddha being identified with his Dharma.

It thus appears that on the strength of the comprehensive basic formula comprising a good number of traditional Indian elements the seated and standing types of Bodhisattva images were perfected in Mathura school of sculpture. Naturally there were variations in the main types due to the intensive fervent of religious thoughts and beliefs amongst the Sarvāstivādī and the Mahāsaṅghika teachers whose activity was primarily responsible for the origin of the Buddha image.

The Katra type, wearing the monk's dress was accepted as the normal form of the seated Buddha image; although in its earliest stages even this type, as it is seen in the case of the Katra image itself, was designated as *Bodhisattva*. Besides, special forms of Bodhisattva and Buddha images began to be made in the Mathura school.

There are some other types of images to be noted. For example, (1) Bodhisattva Maitraya (future Buddha) of whom several examples are found in the Kushāṇa art, is represented in a standing posture, holding his right hand in *abhayamudrā* and an *amṛitaghṭa* (nectar flask or monk's bottle) in the left. For all practical purposes its iconographic formula is as that of the main type of the standig Bodhisattva images but the images are generally smaller in size and not very heavily built. [Fig. 149]. (2) Images of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara are very rare in Mathura art. (3) Images of Kāshyapa Buddha have also been found. He was one of the seven Mānushī Buddhas but depicted independently of his companions. [Fig. 150]. Seven Mānushī Buddhas have already been depicted in the art of Sanchi, each having his distinct Bodhi tree. That tradition was continued in the Kushāṇa art of Mathura.

The important life scenes of the Buddha depicted in Mathura art include Birth (*Jāti*), First Bath, Great Renunciation, Temptation by Māra, Enlightenment, Descent from the heaven of thirty-three gods, Visit by Indra, First Sermon, Mahāparinirvāṇa.

It should be stated to the credit of the great masters working in the Mathura school, that they were alive and receptive to the influences from outside. Hellenistic motifs were accepted and welcomed by them for the purpose of their general stock of

motifs both for decorative and representational art. For example, we have the following :—

(1) Bacchanalian scenes

(2) Hercules fighting the Nemean lion

(3) Rape of Ganymede

(4) Decorative motifs like the garland-bearing Erotes (*mālādhārī deva*)

(5) Vine leaves

(6) Corinthian capital,

and some other Hellenistic motifs which were freely borrowed by the Mathura sculptors and made a part of their own *repertoire.* [Fig. 151].

Our attention is divereted to a class of Buddha images made of the usual Mathura red sandstone but which show such features that are typical of the Gandhāra school. For example, there are some Buddha images having moustaches and amulet string (*rakshāsūtra*) and being seated on a high cane chair, shown wearing Greek sandals. The presence of the moustaches on the face of the Buddha does not fit in with the Indian tradition. It seems to have been a feature borrowed from the Hellenistic images. The presence of the amulet string again points to the borrowing from the west, viz. Iran. There the goddess Atargate was endowed with a conspicuous amulst string. With the growth of Tantrism and the belief in the magical mantras in Buddhism even during the Kushaṇa period, it seems reasonable that in some of the images of the Buddha, which were most probably developed or formulated under the auspices of the special Buddhist sects or schools, the amulet string became a prominent sign in the iconography of the Master's figure. For example, the Bodhisattva image found at Ganesrā village in Mathura district is for all practical purposes identical with the Katra Bodhisattva image. But the former had also an amulet string on the chest. [Fig. 152].

In the Bacchanalian scenes Bacchus is replaced by Kubera seated on mount Kailāsa. He himself is depicted as pot-bellied and wearing a *dhotī,* but his attendants are shown with Hellenistic dress. It should be remembered that the Gandhāra motifs are only a very small fraction of the total output of the Mathura school of sculpture. Only about a dozen sculptures out of five thousand show these foreign features. The genius of the master artists at Mathura developed in its full bloom in accordance with their own traditions and they have blazed a trail of glory that was hardly excelled and that served as the model for the succeeding generations.

There were a number of Buddhist establishments at Mathura during the Śaka-Kushāṇa period as known from the inscriptions, e. g. Guhāvihāra of Kshaharāta-

Śakas built in the time of Shodaśa on the banks of the Yamunā (Lion capital Ins.), Apānakavihāra (No. 1612), Khaṇḍavihāra (No. 2801), Kraushṭikīyavihāra (No. 2740), Hārushavihāra (No. A 2), Śirivihāra (No. 461), Yaśaḷvihāra, Suvaṇṇakaravihāra, Chutakavihāra (1350) etc., through which the four great sects, viz. the Sarvāstivādins Mahāsaṁghikas, Sammitīyas and Dharmaguptakas were functioning with vigorous activity. The earliest to appear on the scene were the Sarvāstivādins followed closely on the heels by the Mahāsaṁghika teachers both of whom established their Stūpas under the patronage of the Khaharāta Kshatrapas. The Sarvāstivādins were interested more in symbol worship but seem to have taken interest also in image worship as shown by a seated Bodhisattva image on which the title Kshatrapa and the name Sarvāstivādin (Śavathivādiyanaṁ) appear together, but the main initiative in formulating the image came from the Mahāsaṁghiyas who were decidedly of Mahāyāna persuation and were responsible for the installing of a large number of images, e.g. A 65, 1612, 2740. The Mahāsaṁghikas were giving a lead on several fronts, being liberal in their Mahāyānic outlook and patronising other subsidiary cults in the service of Buddhism.

Yaksha and Nāga Statues

A special section of Mathura sculptures is devoted to Yaksha and Nāga worship which were folkcults inherited from older times, but elaborated with new iconographic types at Mathura.

Under Yaksha worship we have already seen that Mathura was the most ancient centre for the making of colossal Yaksha images like those famous under the name of Parakham Yaksha and Baroda Yaksha. The Yaksha tradition took a special turn in the form of the images of Kubera and still further in the conspicuous Bacchanalian groups of which half a dozen examples have been found.

The Mathura artists took as their prototype of Kubera the atlante pot-bellied dwarfs with uplifted hands serving as *guhyakas* or *kīchakas* at Bharhut and Sanchi and in the Western Indian caves. With a little change this form was developed into a typical figure of Kubera as a corpulent pot-bellied and squatting figure having a plump face with long moustaches and happy smile, holding a purse and a wine-cup. That may be described as a *śreshṭhin* or a Mahājana type, and truly worthy of being worshipped as the god of wealth (*dhanapati* or *vitteśa*) living on mount Kailāsa.

Side by side with this purely Indian type of Dhanapati Kubera a new type of image was developed at Mathura which has been styled as 'bacchanalian groups', showing the following features :—

Fig. 118 b

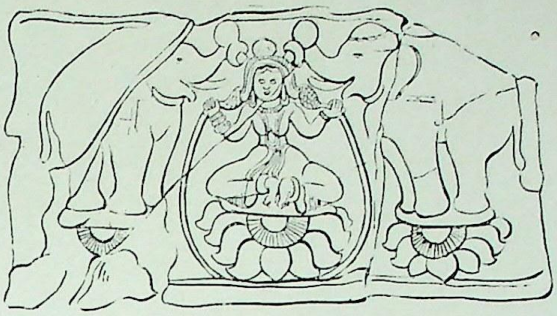


Fig. 119

Fig. 118 c

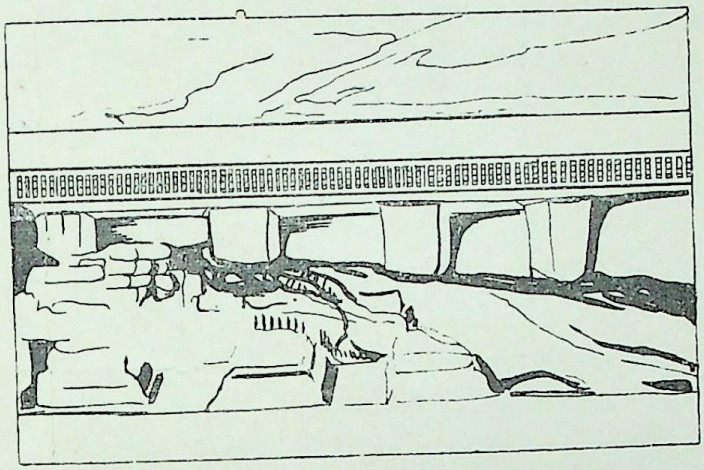


Fig. 120

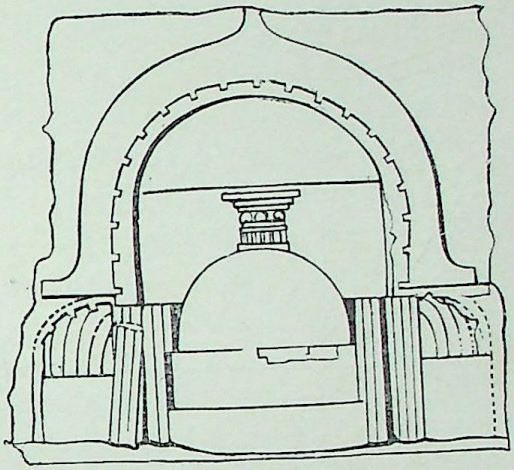


Fig. 121

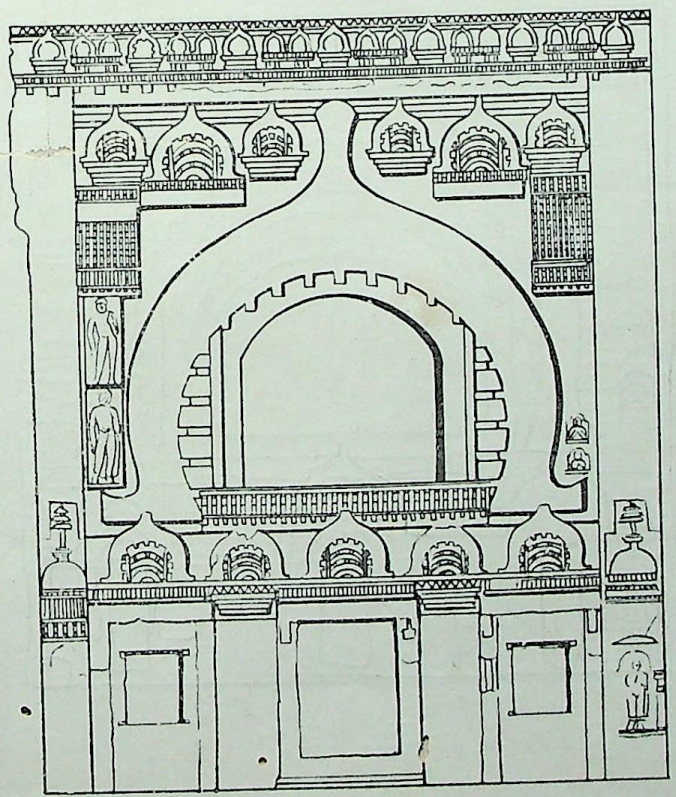


Fig. 122

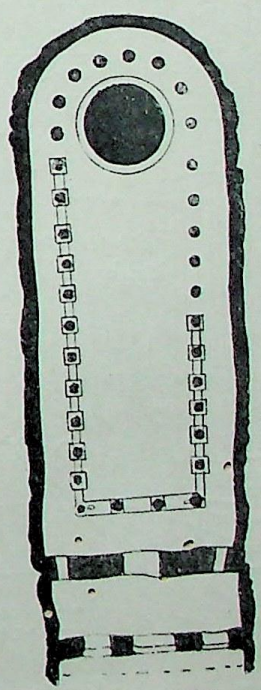


Fig. 127

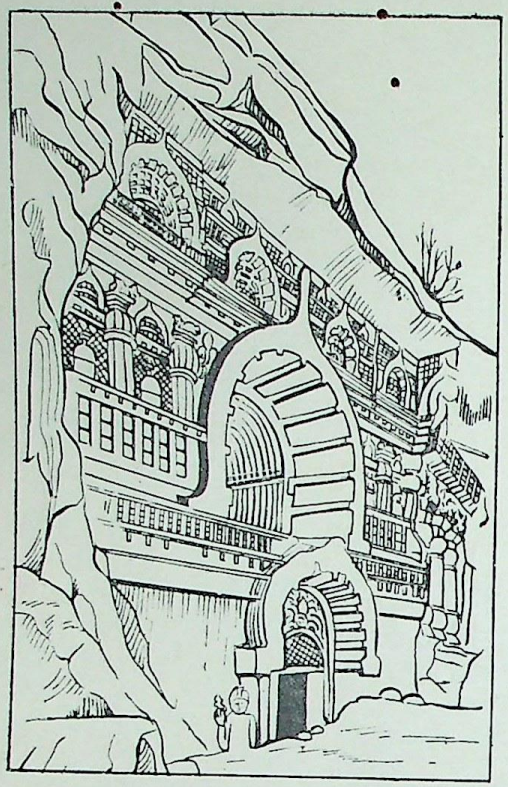


Fig. 123

Fig. 124

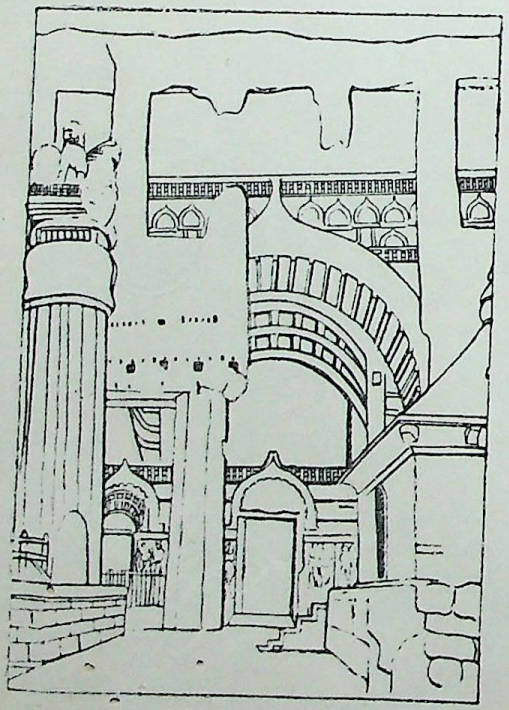


Fig. 125 a

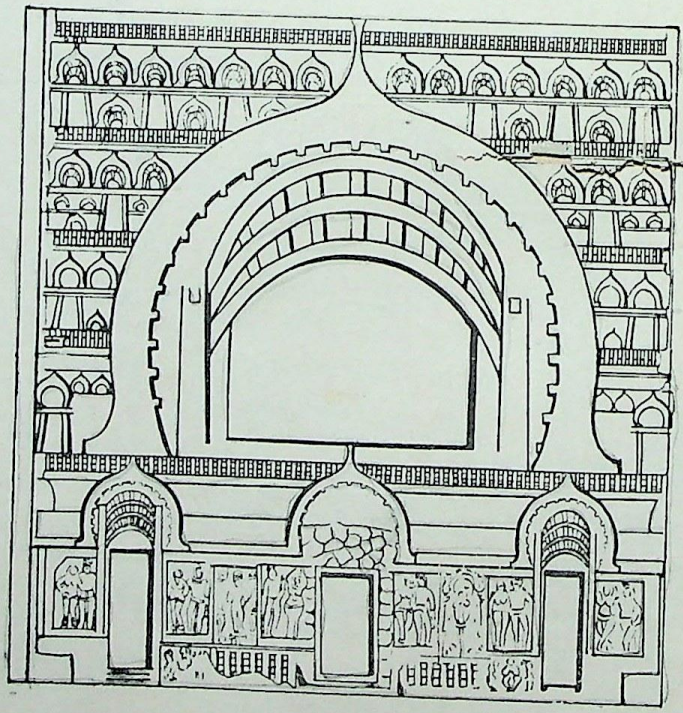


Fig. 125 b

1. Large blocks of stone carved on the two sides with groups of figures in scenes of drinking and intoxication ; 2. The principal figure is Kubera seated on rocky Kailāsa wearing *dhoti* or in the words of Princep 'highly orthodox and Brāhmanical' drapery. This pot-bellied figure answers to the Indian ideal of Kubera without the least influence of Bacchus or Silenus ; 3. but the artists were conscious of the Hellenistic influences coming from the north-west as shown by the dress of the female attendants, for example, one on the Pali Khera group is 'clad in a long-sleeved jacket and a skirt falling down on the feet which are shod with plump shoes'. 4. The shape of the handled drinking goblet held in right hand of Kubera also shows distinct Hellenistic influence. 5. There is a figure in the Pali Khera group holding a bunch of vine-grapes. 6. In all examples we find a cup on the top, the one in the Stacy's group being 16″ in diameter and 8″ deep.

The first Bacchanalian group was found in 1836 by Colonel Stacy and is now preserved in the Indian Museum. It shows Kubera as the principal figure whose 'portly carcass, drunken lassitude, and vine-wreathed forehead, stamp the individual, while the drapery of his attendants pronounces them at least foreign to India, whatever may be thought of deity's own costume, which is certainly highly orthodox and Brahmanical'. [Fig. 153].

The group from Pali Khera (C 2, Mathura Museum) shows on its obverse all the elements analysed above ; and on the reverse the same fat man 'in a state of helpless intoxication'. But the culmination was reached in the Bacchanalian group from Maholi exposed in 1938 showing a complete Indianisation of the entire subject carved on the two sides and also an aesthetic perfection in the true Mathura style. The sculpture measures 3′ 4″ × 2′ 6″ × 1′ 2″. It supported a bowl, now partially damaged, resting on the top of the trunk of a tree carved in the background. On obverse there are four figures, the middle one showing a graceful female in half kneeling posture, in a drunken mood resting her left hand on the shoulders of a *kubjikā* girl who has a goblet in her hand. The lady in her drooping posture is being supported by a male figure, obviously her husband, who holds her right hand. In the background is a female attendant, a hermaphrodite (*varshadhara*), expressing surprise. On the reverse side there is a scene involving four figures in a joyous dance. [Fig. 154].

The interest of this find is enhanced by the fact that a somewhat mutilated specimen carved on both sides and similar to this group was found from Naroli village, about half a mile southeast of Maholi, in 1922-23, and is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. An exact copy of the reverse side of the Maholi Bacchanalian group is found reproduced in the upper panel of a jamb fragment (No. 371, Mathura M) which was rescued from the well of the famous Kankali Tila in 1914, which place also lies within a radius of two miles from Maholi. It is evident that the residents of the

three villages, Palikhera, Naroli and Maholi, situated within less than a mile of each other, entered into a healthy rivalry each creating a bacchanalian group for itself and the artisans of Maholi excelled in their originality and workmanship. Another fact to be noted is that at Maholi the Bacchanalian group was found in association with a colossal Bodhisattva which shows that such groups were welcomed in Buddhist environment since they represented the cult of Kubera reconciled to the religion of the Buddha. A still greater degree of *rapprochement* is visible in the form of images and statuettes showing Kubera with his consort Hārītī holding a purse and a wine-cup or with drinking bowls placed in front of both when it appears that the worship of Kubera had become a regular cult as a benevolent deity offering wealth and of Hārītī as the presiding deity of children. The popularity of this cult is further shown by the discovery of independent statuettes of both Kubera and Hārītī. It appears that the developing iconography of Kubera drew to itself several strands, viz. the bacchanalian ideal of *āpāna-goshṭhī* as popular amongst the Indian and the Indo-Greeks (Madraka-Yavana of the Mbh.) of the Panjab, who were following the cult of the Greek revelries. To this was added the cult of the Buddhist goddess Hārītī and that of the Brāhmanical goddess Bhadrā, both treated as consorts of Kubera or Pañchika.

Another significant group of Mathura images is that of the Nāgas in an ancient tradition handed down from Bharhut and Sanchi but much elaborated at Mathura in association with the cult of Balarāma holding a club, a ploughshare, and a drinking cup. [Figs. 155-6]. These Balarāma statues marked by a *vanamālā* are somewhat tame in comparison to the pure Nāgarāja statues, e.g. Chargaon Nāga which is colossal and voluminous with vigorous coils on the two sides and a powerfully rolled girdle.

The tremendous artistic creativity of the Mathura school coincides with the reign of Śaka-Kushāṇas. The influence which these rulers exercised on the political and cultural history of Mathura is shown by the discovery of their inscriptions and of a *Devakula* or a Hall of royal statues at Māṭ, a village about nine miles north of Mathura which yielded the life-sife partraits of Vema Takshma, Kanishka and Chashṭana.

There are two phases of Śaka-Kushāṇa rule in India, viz. an earlier one of Kshaharāta Śakas, Liyaka and Patika at Taxila and Ranjuvala and Shoḍāsa at Mathura, of Nahpāna and Ushavadāta at Ujjayinī, all of them ruling in the first century B. C. (c. 80 B. C.–57 B. C.) The latter phase coincides with the reigns of the two Kadphises rulers, Kujula and Vema (c. 1 A. D.–7 8 A. D.) and of Kanishka and his successors (c. 78 A. D.–176 A. D.)

The institution of *Devakula*, i. e. a gallery of royal effigies is described by Bhāsa in his Pratimā Nāṭaka in a manner which leaves no doubt about its real

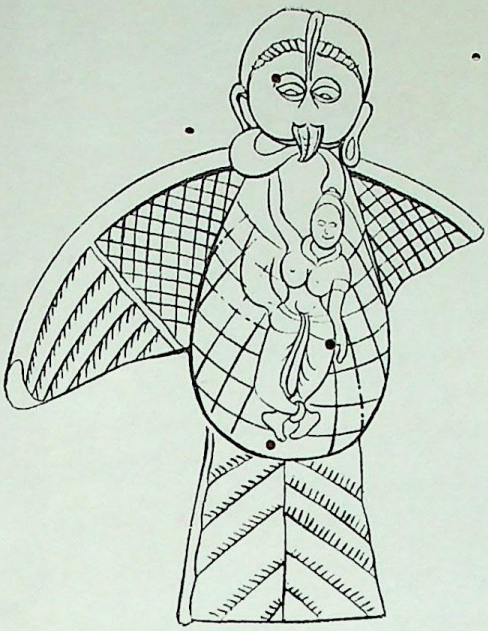


Fig. 151 b

Fig. 151 d

Fig. 150

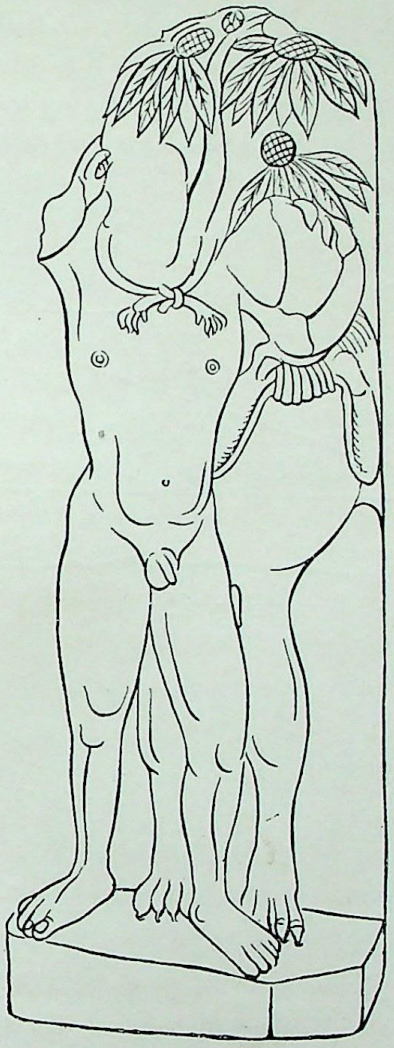


Fig. 151 a

Fig. 151 e

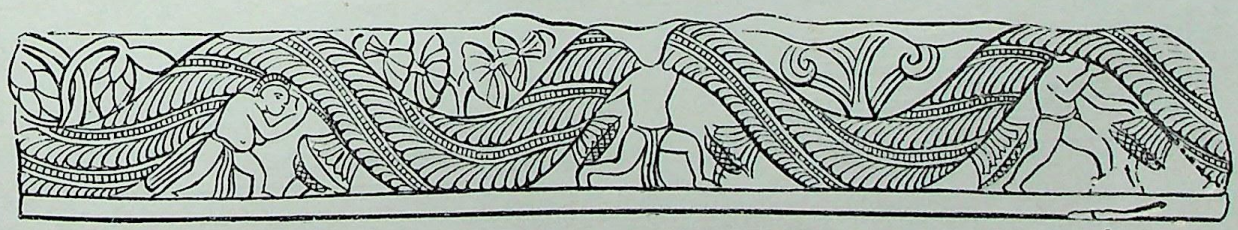


Fig. 151 c

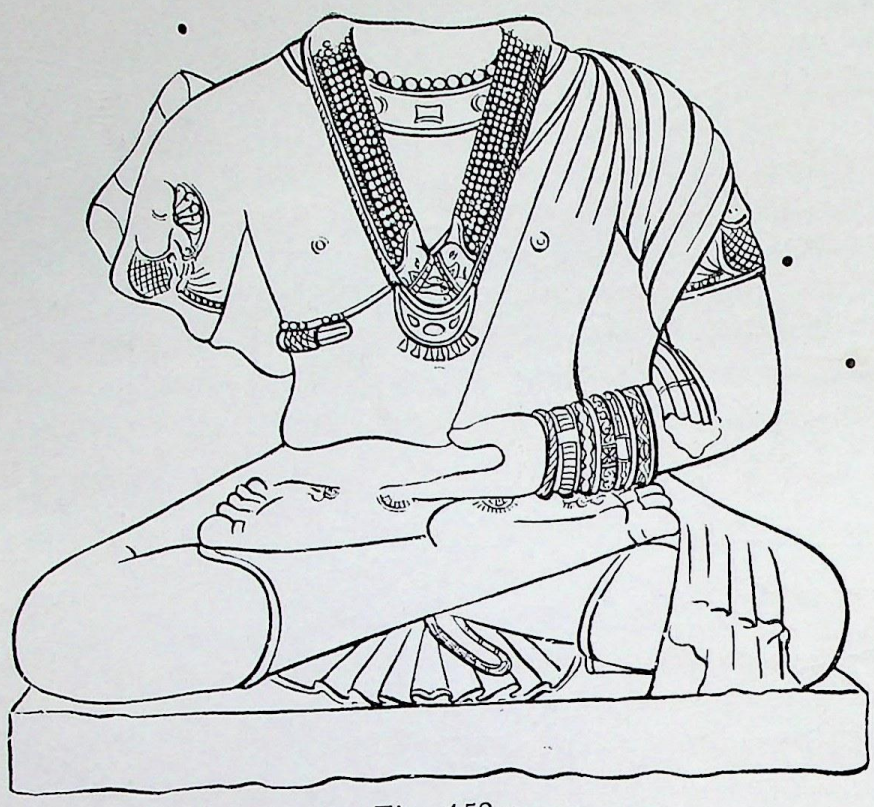


Fig. 152

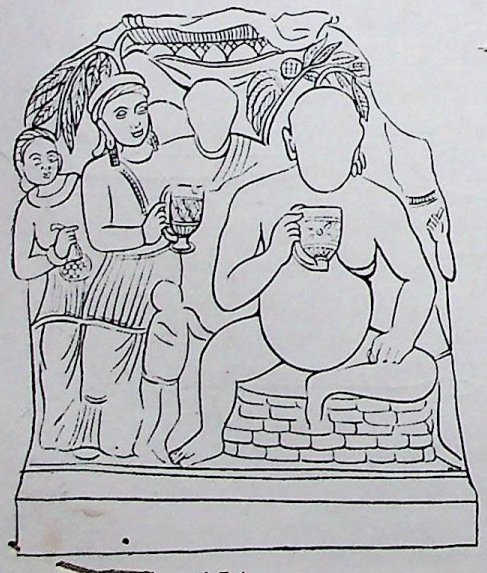


Fig. 154 a

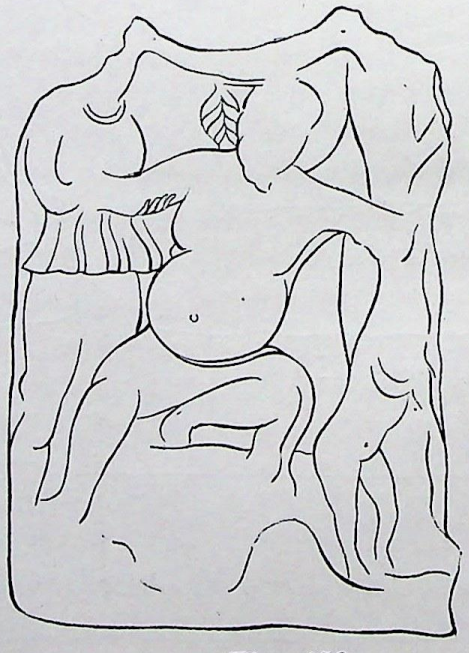


Fig. 153

i

ii

Fig. 154 b

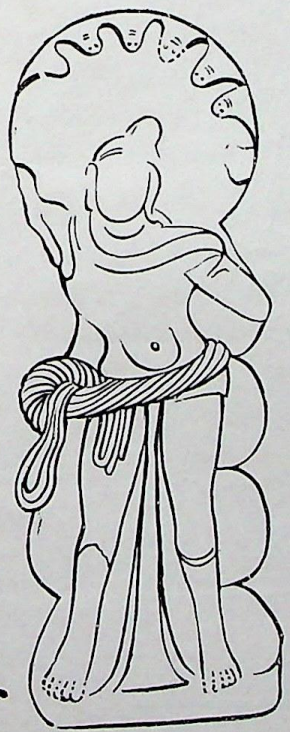


Fig. 155

Fig. 156

Fig. 160

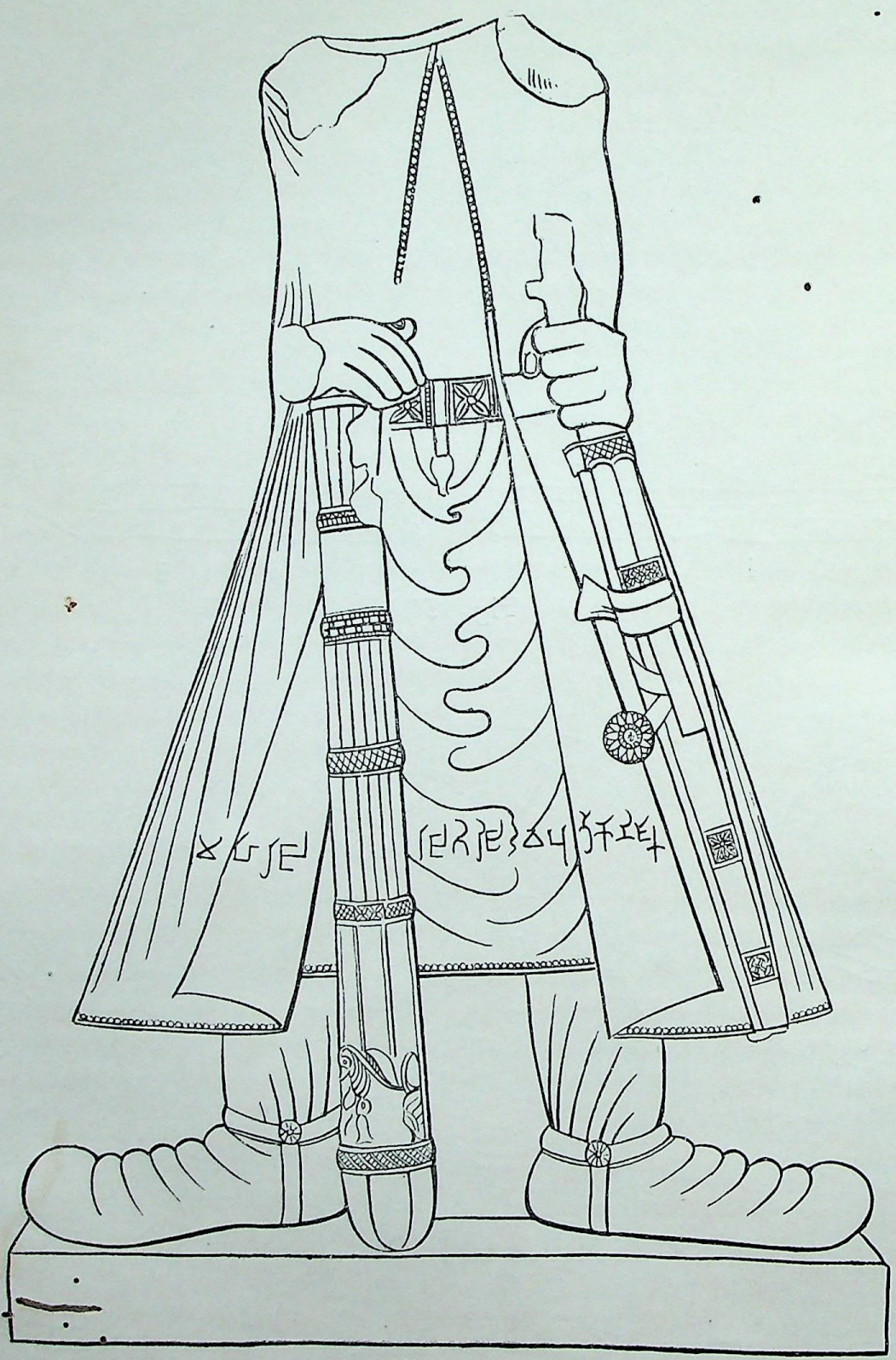


Fig. 158

existence. The Kushāṇas obviously adopted it in a full-fledged form, probably due to some tradition which they had seen in their homeland as also indicated by the wall of royal statues in the palace of Toprak Kalē in Kirgiztan in Central Asia. The emperors at Mathura attached more than ordinary significance is shown by their inscriptions, which as one on the statue of Vema refers to the construction of the Devakula with ancillary monuments, viz. a garden (*ārāma*), pond (*pushkariṇī*) and well (*udapāna*), and when after the lapse of time the buildings fell in ruins another inscription of a high officer of Huvishka refers to the steps taken for the repair of the Devakula.

The stone statues of Vema and Kanishka confirm the portraits on their coins. The headless statue (ht. 6′ 10″, square base 3′ 3″) of Vema shows the emperor seated on a lion-throne holding in right hand a sword in front of the breast and the left hand placed on a scabbard laid across the knees. The enthroned monarch is dressed in a long sleeved tunic with a richly embroidered border nearly three inches broad shown running down the breast in a double band and continued over the knees and the heads of lions on the throne. The right sleeve shows similar ornamentation. The tunic is bespangled with little rosettes. Under it was another short coat indicated near the neck. The legs were covered by heavily folded trousers and the feet by thickly padded boots decorated with a vine pattern three inches wide rising from the toes upwards. This was the characteristic northern dress (*udīchya veśa*) worn by the Scythians which is repeated on many other sculptures at Mathura and also seen in a couple of guardian figures at Bharhut and Sanchi. An inscription on the top of the foot-stool (*pāda-pīṭha*) refers to Mahārāja rājātirāja devaputra Kushāṇaputra Shāhi Vema takshama in which *Vema* is the name of the monarch and *takshama* his title, an Old-Iranian word meaning strong or brave. From the viewpoint of art this statue is a superb creation representing the best qualities of portraiture combining a rare dignity and matter-of-fact style. [Fig. 157].

What has been said above for Vema applies more graphically to the portrait of Kanishka. A startling discovery made in the Devakula at Māṭ by RB Pt Radhakrishna in 1911 was the standing statue of Kanishka (ht. 5′ 7½″ including base but exclusive of the tenon 14″), bearing the epigraph Mahārājā Rājātirājā Devaputro Kāṇishko. The king is clad in a tunic reaching down to the knees and held round the loin by means of a gridle, of which only two square plaques are visible in front, indicating a belt consisting of a series of such plaques similar to the belt we find on the torso of Shastana. The remainder of the belt is concealed by another long upper-garment an over-coat, *chogā*, which falls below the knees and is consequently somewhat longer than the under-garment. Both garments are plain, only the seam being

shown. The fold of the robes are indicated by slightly engraved lines. Most conspicuous are the heavy boots with straps round the ankles, similar to those worn now-a-days in Turkestan. The plain dress contrasts with the elaborate weapons. The sword has a long hilt decorated on the top with a hamsa's head. The sheath is decorated with three plaques (Skt. *padaka*) similar to those of the belt. The point of the sheath is broken. It is curious that the sheath is not attached to the belt, but is fastened by means of two straps to the upper garment. The other weapon is a mace, 3′ 5″ long including its handle. It is strengthened with fine metal bands which are clearly shown in the sculpture ; the fifth and the lowermost band is decorated with a fish-tailed *makara* head which like the bands must have originally been of metal. [Fig. 158].

The sculptor of this image has shown considerable skill in portraying faithfully the great king. The maker of this image whatever his nationality may have been, was certainly not inspired with the ideals of Grecian art. The characteristic features of the statue are smart rigidity and strict symmetry. The pose is realistic without attempt at idealisation. It is free-standing and frontal in the most rigorous sense of the word.

The third statue from the Māṭ Devakula is a headless torso labelled as *Shastana* which is understood to be but another form of Chashṭana (Tiastenes of Ptolemy), the Śaka-Satrap of Ujjayinī. He appears in the form of a young prince wearing trousers and a long coat secured by a beautiful belt made of square and round plaques, adorned with Scythian horsemen and tritons with forked tails (*mahoraga*). The presence of this statue in the gallery of Kushāṇa portraits is significant, indicating that he was a junior contemporary of Kanishka and probably related to him. This statue has all the strong points of the art of portraiture (*pratikṛiti*) in which the main stress was given to the resemblance (*sādṛiśya*) to the original form. [Fig. 159].

These sculptures furnish rich material for the study of the art of making royal portraits developed for the first time in Indian art in the Mathura school. There were some other sculptures of royal persons and high officials in the portrait gallery at Māṭ but found only in a fragmentary state.

A group of half a dozen heads wearing either the conical hat which distingnished the Tigra-khauda branch of Śakas or a flat-topped conical cap with woollen exterior, may be classified under portraits. Two of them bear monograms, viz. *nāyasa* and *lavaṇa* and are marked by royal dignity. One of these heads now in the Budapest Museum wears a cylindrical tapering cap with ornamental parallel patterns

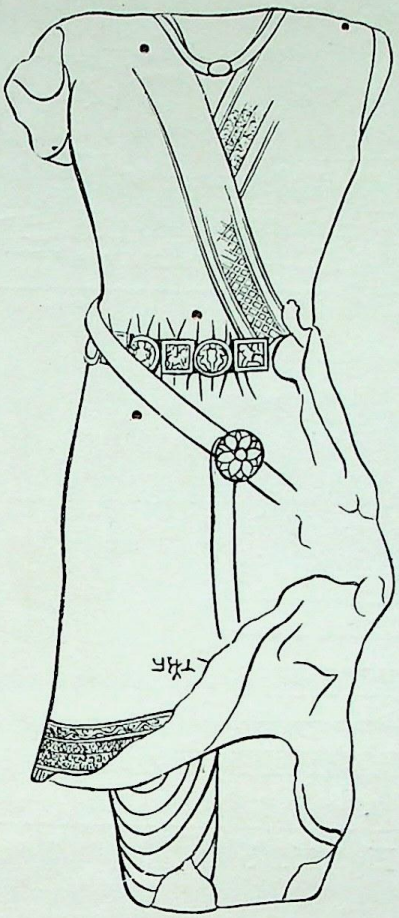


Fig. 159

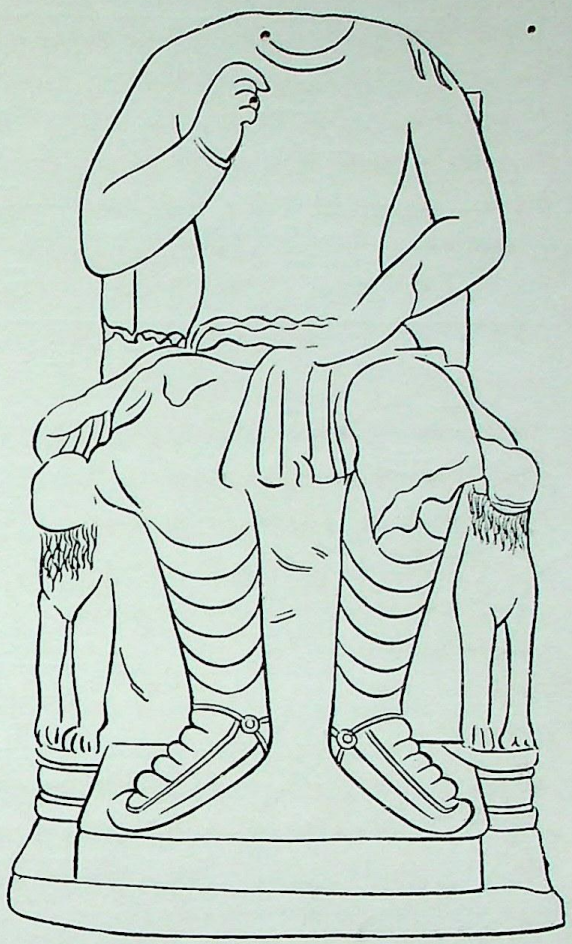


Fig. 157

Fig. 163

Fig. 161

Fig. 162

a

b

Fig. 164

PLATE L

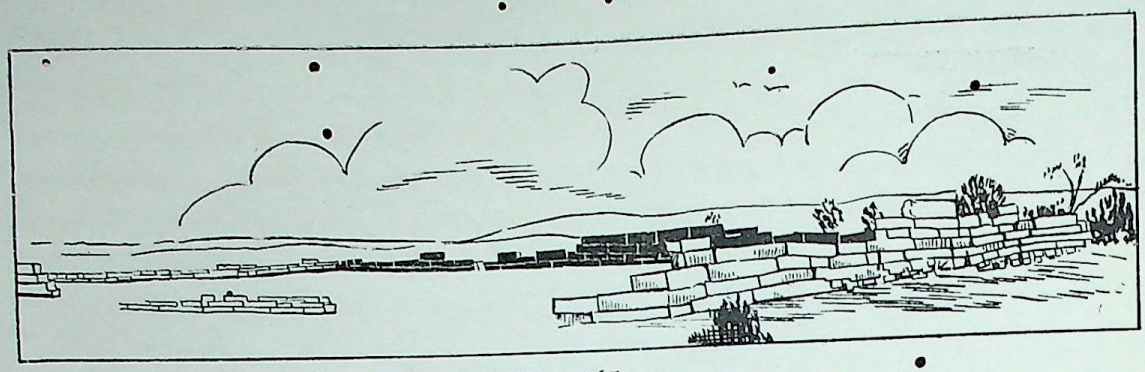


Fig. 165 a

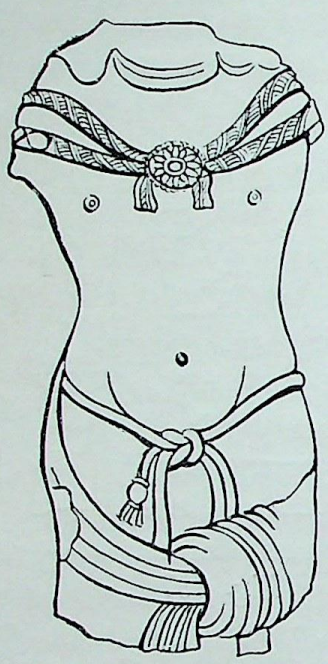


Fig. 166

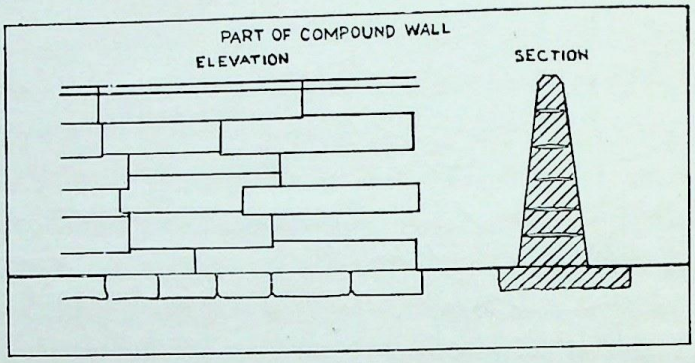


Fig. 165 b

Fig. 168

Fig. 167

Fig. 169

and is adorned in front with a rosette enclosing an unopened bud in the centre which is typical of the head-gear decoration during the Kushāṇa period. [Fig. 160].

Three other Kushāṇa heads are noteworthy for their peculiar headress, viz. a helmet with two ram's recurved horns (e.g. No. 2564). This emblem signifies the 'Iranian Majesty' (Herzfeld, *Kushano-Sassanian Coins*, p. 22), and has been traced on the so-called Macedonian soldier type of coins of Kujula Kadphises I (Whitehead, *PMC*, Vol I, p. 173), and also at Mathura on the well known Indo-Persian capital found from the Chaubara mound, which has four winged animals with human heads adorned with ram's horns. [Figs. 161-64].

Brāhmanical images in Mathura art

Mathura had become the centre of the *Bhakti* cult several centuries before the Christian era. This cult centred round the worship of Vāsudeva-Kṛishṇa who was regarded as a divine incarnation in human form. Kṛishṇa was considered to be the incarnation of Vishṇu. There are several references to the worship of Vishṇu in the Ṛigveda. He is mentioned there as Gopa (protector of the cows), Sakhivān (one having companions), which epithets contain the germs of his later biography. In the Pāṇini's Ashṭādhyāyī there is reference to the worship of Vāsudeva and his associate Arjuna whose Bhakta or devotee followers were known as Vāsudevaka and Ārjunaka. This clear evidence is indicative of the high antiquity of the religious worship of Kṛishṇa. In the Mahābhārata Śāntiparva there is a long discourse of about thousand ślokas known as the Nārāyaṇī Parva in which we find the worship of God Nārāyaṇa as the regular feature of religious belief and side by side reference is also made to the Sātvata doctrine amongst the Bhāgavatas, the followers of which were known as Ekāntin. Against these religious backgrounds can be explained the large number of sculptures of Brāhmanical gods and goddesses in the Mathura school of sculpture. Particular attention may be drawn to the archæological evidences available in the form of the following epigraphs :—

(1) Ghosuṇḍī well inscription which refers to the gods Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva and their religious shrine called Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka which was enclosed by a railing (*prākāra*) and had in its centre a stone slab (*pūjā-Śilā*).

(2) Bhilsa inscription engraved on an octagonal Garuḍa pillar erected in the year 12th of the Bhāgavata king in the shrine of Bhagavān Vishṇu (*Gotamī-putena bhāgavatena bhagavato prāsādottame garuḍadvaja kārito*).

(3) Besnagar Garuḍadhvaja inscription of the Greek ambassador Heliodoros in which he calls himself a *Bhāgavata.*

(4) Mathura lintel inscription of king Vasu mentioning the building of a Mahāsthāna (the great shrine) of Bhagavān Vāsudeva which had a *Vedikā, Toraṇa* and a *Chatuḥśāla*. This inscription is of exceptional importance, for it mentioned king Vasu who according to the Nārāyaṇī Parva was the supreme patron of the Nārāyaṇī and the Sātvata Dharma. He was as we learn from this inscription a contemporary of Mahākshatrapa Shoḍāsha (c. first century B.C.)

(5) Mora well-inscription engraved on a long stone-slab mentioning a stone-temple (Śaila devagṛiha) in which images (*archā*) of the Five Vṛishṇi Heroes were installed.

From the above inscriptions the following points may be noted :—

(1) The kings and rulers, who patronised the Vaiśṇava cult, took pride in stylising themselves as Bhāgavatas.

(2) The new cult attracted devotees from all classes of people including foreigners like Heliodoros. It shows that the doors of the Bhāgavata religion were open without distinction of class or rank to the widest range of people.

(3) Vishṇu was worshipped either alone as Vāsudeva or in the company of Saṅkarshaṇa, i. e. Kṛishṇa and Balarāma as pair and at other times in a group of Five Vṛishṇi Heroes, representing the *Vyūha* or litany of the Bhāgavata religion.

(4) The two deities Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva are regarded as supreme under the epithet Sarveśvara (Paramount over all) admitting their pre-eminent position in the entire pantheon.

(5) The religious shrines to the worship of Vāsudeva and his associates were built which were known as *Mahāsthāna* (of Mathura lintel inscription) or *Prāsādottama* (of Bhilsa-inscription) which clearly point to the paramount position of the shrines of the Bhāgavatas over the shrines of the other deities. It shows that the Bhāgavatas initiated a regular building activity of religious monuments styled as *Prāsāda, Devagṛiha*, etc. Patañjali also has referred to the shrine of Balarāma and Keśava (*prāsāde dhanapati-rāmakeśavānām*). In the case of the Ghosuṇḍī monument, called the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka, the earlist shrine of the Bhāgavatas took the form of an enclosure or an open quadrangle having a stupendous stone railing alround and a stone slab (*pūja-śilā*) in the centre. This was known as the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka in the popular language of those times. It appears that later on, four gateways began to be added to the railing as mentoned in the Mathura lintel inscription—*Chatuḥśālatoraṇa vedikā*. [Fig. 165].

(6) With the institution of regular shrines in the Bhāgavata cult it goes without saying that actual images representing divinities like Vāsudeva, Saṅkarshaṇa

etc. were set up in the form of stone images. We have actually discovered in the excavations at the Morā shrine stone torsos representing the Vṛishṇi Heroes (*Vṛishṇīnāṁ pañchavīaṇām archāḥ*), whose names as we know from the Vāyu Purāṇa were Balarāma, Kṛishṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba. Their style closely follows that of the free-standing Yakshas in that they are carved in the round. They are dressed in a *dhotī* and *uttarīya* and some types of ornaments as found on the Yaksha figures, their right-hand is held in *abhayamudrā* and the muscles of the breast and body generally are emphasised like those in the Yaksha statues. The only noticeable distinction is in the size of these two groups of images. Whereas the Yaksha statues are of a grandiose style of colossal size, the Vaishṇava images are comparatively smaller, approximating nearly the life-size figures. It appears that this diminution of the size of images was a developing tendency and the same may be said with regard to the Bodhisattva images. These statues from Morā furnish undisputed proof of the priority of Vaishṇava images over the images of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva. [Figs. 166-7].

This early formulation of the Brāhmanical stone images representing the deities of the Bhāgavata pantheon was a fact of supreme value in the evolution of image worship in ancient India. Surely this movement brought about far-reaching changes in the religious ideas of the people of all denominations and naturally could not have left the followers of the Buddha without coming under its influence. During the couple of centuries, i. e. from the first century B. C. to the first century A. D. a Bhāgavata predilection for image-worship gave such universal acceptance and momentum as ultimately culminated in throwing open the doors to the making of the image of the Buddha as well.

Images of Brahmanical gods and goddesses began to be made in considerable number in the beginning of the Kushāṇa period at Mathura. The pantheon was gradually elaborated and became rather complex in the Gupta period. The following is the full list of the gods and goddesses whose images have been found in the Mathura school of sculpture.

I. ŚUṄGA PERIOD : Balarāma ; Vṛishṇi Vīra Images. [Figs. 1667].

II. KUSĀHṆA PERIOD : (a) Brahmā, (b) Śiva—(i) in *Liṅga* form (ii) in human form, (iii) in ardhanārīśvara form and (iv) Śīva-Pārvatī standing together, (c) Kārttikeya, (d) Gaṇapati, (e) Vishṇu, (f) Sūrya, (g) Indra, (h) Kāmadeva, (i) Balarāma, (j) Sarasvatī, (k) Lakshmī (l) Durgā :—(i) Mahishamardinī and (ii) Siṁhavāhinī, (m) Seven Divine Mothers (*sapta matṛikās*), (n) Kubera—(i) alone and (ii) Kubera and Hārītī.

III. GUPTA PERIOD : All the above gods and goddesses with the addition of the following are met with in the Mathura school of sculpture of the Gupta period :

(I) Harihara, the combined and composite form of Vishṇu and Śiva (II) Vishṇu in Trivikrama incarnation, (III) Piṅgala, an attendant of Sūrya, (1V) Daṇḍa, an attendant of Sūrya, (V) Navagraha, (VI) Kṛishṇa in his various childhood legends, e. g. Sakaṭa-līlā, Keśī-Vadha, (VII) Gaṅgā and Jamunā, (VIII) various Āyudha-purushas (personified divine attributes), e. g. Śaṅkha, Chakra, Gadā and Padma represented as human beigns holding these attributes or symbols.

Of these only Sūrya, Śiva, and Gaja-Lakshmī were represented in Śuṅga art elsewhere prior to the development of the Kushaṇa sculpture. Sūrya riding on quadriga and three-eyed Śiva holding a triśūla represented on railing pillars at Bodhagaya. The earliest Śiva Liṅga representation is found at Gudimallam in South India and another at Bhita near Allahabad, in North India. Gaja-Lakhmī is represented in the art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhagaya and Udaigiri-Khandagiri in Orissa and earlier Western Indian caves.

These may be described as follows :

BRAHMĀ : Depicted for the first time in stone. Amongst Pañchāla coins those of Prajāpatimitra show the figure of Prajāpati or Brahmā on one side. It is a miniature human figure with one head and probably four arms. At Mathura, Brahmā is depicted with four faces (sometimes three faces only in a front view), holding his right hand in abhayamudrā. He is a four-armed pot-bellied figure, having a beard and also matted looks on the head. The beard, the jaṭā and the potbelly become distinctive features of those gods who were considered to be of the Brāhmaṇa class. For example, Brahmā and Agni. The earliest image (382) shows the god with three faces and a haloed bust superimposed at the back of the central head to complete the number of four. On the reverse is carved an Aśoka tree similar to that in Nāgarājñī and Indra images (392) which also belong to the Kushāṇa period. The right hand of the projecting figure is held in *abhayamudrā* and the left sholder is covered with drapery like in Buddha images of this period. Images of Brahmā were also worshipped in the Gupta period and several good specimens have been preserved. [Figs. 169-9]. The worship of Brahmā continued in the medieval period when his images with Sarasvatī became popular and have been actually found at many centres throughout the country. Later on during the Muslim period the worship of Brahmā gradually went out of fashion and the belief developed that he had been ousted from the religious orbit due to an alleged utterance of a lie; only a fiction. The main reason was the emergence of Vishṇu and Śiva as two great religious symbols which inculcated the worship of only their respective divinities. Consequently Brahmā went into the

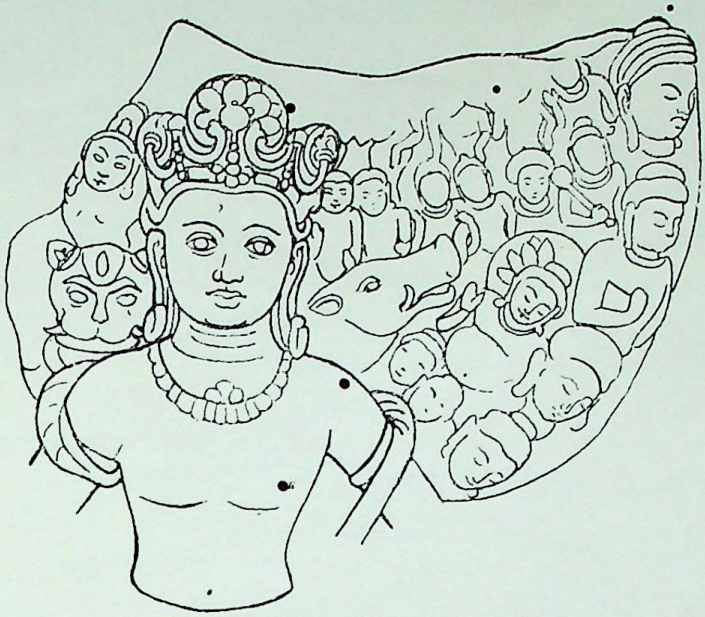


Fig. 171

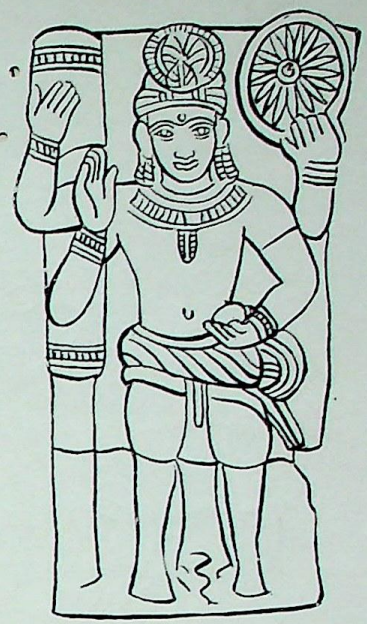


Fig. 170

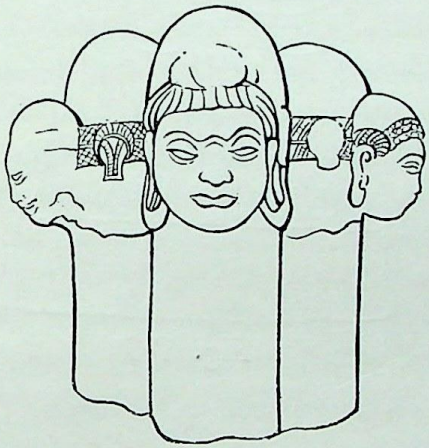


Fig. 174

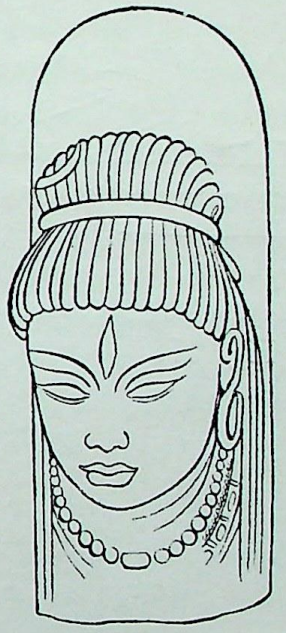


Fig. 173

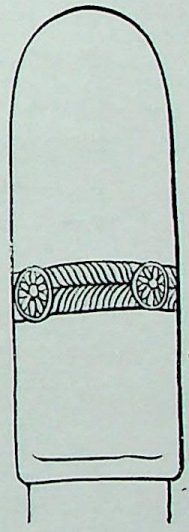


Fig. 172

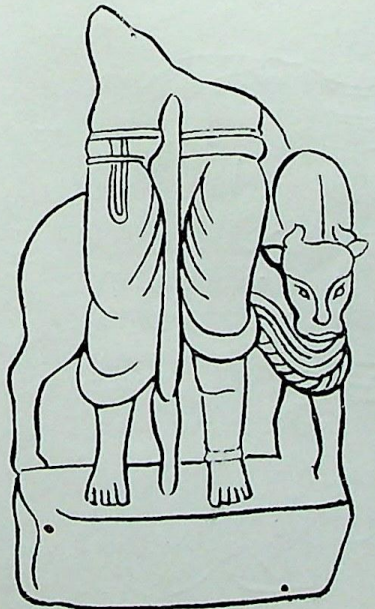


Fig. 175

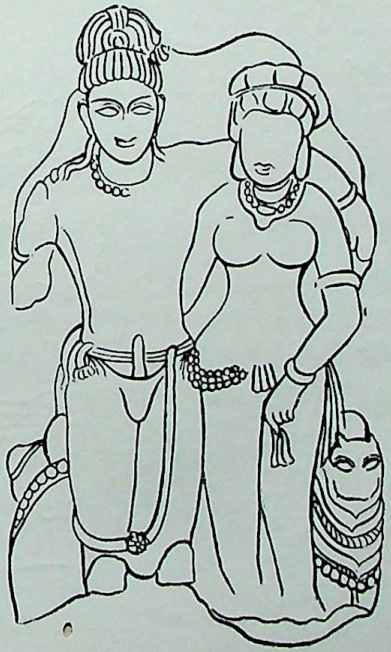


Fig. 176

Fig. 177

Fig. 178

Fig. 179

Fig. 180

Fig. 181

background and fell into neglect. But at one time his worship extended from the Himālaya to the far South where his images have been found. At present the one living temple of Brahmā is the one at Pushkara near Ajmer.

VISHṆU :—Mathura was the centre of Vishṇu worship from very early times, may be from the fifth century B. C. Clear archaeological proof in the form of Vishṇu image and inscriptions is forthcoming from the late Śuṅga period in the first century B. C. when Kshaharāta Śakas (Rañjuvula and his son Shoḍāsa) became the rulers at Mathura.

In the Kushāṇa period, however, regular images of Vishṇu began to be made. Several types of such images are found wearing a *mukuṭa* on the head and other ornaments on the body, and dressed in a *dhotī* and a scarf. The position of the four hands is rather remarkable, the right hand is held in *abhayamudrā*, the corresponding left hand is placed nearly the hip (i. e. akimbo) and holds an *amṛita-gaṭa* (monk's bottle or nectar-glass), the two extra hands a mace (*gaḍā*) and *Chakra* respectively. If the two extra hands are excluded, the earliest form of Vishṇu is exactly similar to that of the Bodhisattva Maitreya and both must be taken to be the products of the same formula. [Fig. 170].

There are also other image of Vishṇu with eight hands holding different attributes. There are some statues showing four-armed standing Vishṇu with Lakshmī by the side and a small figure of Garuḍa in between them. With the development of the Pañcharātra-Bhāgavata cult there was an elaboration in the iconographic representation of Vishṇu. In the Gupta period we come across three types of Vishṇu images in the Mathura school (1) Standing images—(Sthānaka mūrti) of Vishṇu alone with four arms holding four āyudhas (attributes), (2) The Nṛisiṁha-Varāha-Vishṇu with a central human face and a Varāha face projecting on one shoulder and a lion face on the other. [Fig.171]. This composite image is very often described in the Purāṇic literature and is also described as the image of Mahā-Vishṇu or Viśva-rūpa-Vishṇu (i. e. Vishṇu in cosmic form). In the Gupta sculpture of the Mathura school several important images of this type have been found. There is a special group of images in which besides the two extra heads of Varāha and Nṛisiṁha a number of other divine figures like the 8 Vasus, 11 Rudras and 12 Ādityas etc. are also depicted on the halo of the divine figure as forming part of his litany. These typical examples represent Mahā-Vishṇu in his cosmic form. [Fig. 171].

(3) The third variety of Vishṇu image in the Gupta period depicts him as Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu, i. e. the Vishṇu sleeping on the Śesha. This was an iconographic representation by the symbolic sculptures of the cosmic legend of creation ; Śesha

representing the infinite or the absolute aspect of Brahman and Vishṇu symbolising his relative manifestation as the universe in which He Himself pervades.[1]

In the Gupta period details of Krishṇa's life and his various exploits began to be depicted in sculpture. For example, lifting of the mount Govardhana, and Kāliya-mardana in Mathura art, Shakaṭa-Līlā in the Brahmanical temple at Devagarh, Dhenukāsura Līlā and scenes of Rādhā-Kṛishṇa love-sports in the panels of the Stūpa at Paharpur (which are of somewhat later date). Several other scenes are also depicted on terracotta plaques from the site of Suratgarh, Bikāner.

BALARĀMA : He was worshipped under the name of Saṅkarshaṇa along with Vāsudeva in the early Bhāgavata religion. A very early image of Balarāma was found near Mathura which is now in the Lucknow Museum. Balarāma is standing and has a canopy of serpent hoods round the head as well as the coils of the serpent at his back, and he holds a *musala* (club) in his right hand and *hala* (plough) in the left hand. It shows that the iconographic formula of Balarāma had already been determined in the Śuṅga period. His dress is similar to that of the Yaksha images consisting of a heavy turban, conspicuous ear-rings, a scarf and a dhoti. Balarāma images continued to be made during the Kushāṇa and Gupta periods. But they are distinguished not only so much by the serpent hoods but also by the wine cup held in his left hand. In the Gupta images he also wears a long garland on his body and he is showen with four arms.

ŚIVA—Śiva is known through literary evidence in the Vedic period. There is evidence of Śiva worship also in the Indus Valley. He is there probably represented in the form of Paśupati (lord of creatures). It appears that the worship of Śiva continued as a widespread cult throughout the country i. e. both in the North and in the South. Even in Gandhāra, Bactria, Kapiśā and the region of the Oxus Śiva worship

1. The Bhāgavatas adopted this significant epithet 'Vishṇu' as the name of the creator (*veveshṭi vyāpnoti iti Vishṇuḥ*, Vishṇu is that who is all pervasive). This definition of divinity was at once sanctifying a metaphysical truth and at the same time marked by unique clarity which could be understood by the most ordinary persons. Throughout the Bhāgavata-literature the name Vishṇu becomes supreme, the acceptance of this name also had a practical consequence. It helped to achieve the synthesis of the diverse deities into one central divinity. The Bhāgavatas emphasised the fact that Vishṇu was the divine creator, preserver and destroyer of the cosmos, i. e. the supreme symbol of the triple manifestation (*Traiguṇya*) and that again it was Vishṇu who was the transcendent of the absolute Brahman beyond all manifestations (Nirguṇa). The synthesis of the numerous tutelary divinities with the god Vishṇu as the centre of the things became an easy and convenient process of things. The Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu image may be considered as a triumph of symbolic representation in which the infinite absolute and the relative aspects of Brahman (Nirguṇa and Saguṇa Brahman) have been cast into an inalienable alliance and this image rightly became the object of enthusiasm for the Bhāgavata worshippers.

seems to have been an important element of the popular religion. Dr. Foucher has suggested that the Kushāṇas on their coming to India were converted to Śaivism somewhere in the north-west where Śaivism was a predominant factor in the religious beliefs. We know from the coins of Vema-Kadaphises that he gave himself the title of Maheśvara, i. e. a devotee of Śiva. On all his coins without exception Śiva or one of his emblems is depicted to the exculsion of all other deities. The figure of Śiva continued to be shown on the coins of Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva. In the Kushāṇa period Mathura had become an important head-quarter of the Pāśupata cult of Śaivism. An inscription of the time of Chandra-Gupta II dated 381 A. D. refers to certain Pāśupata teachers who were tenth in descendance from the original founder of the sect and who installed two Śiva Liṅgas by the name of Upamiteśvara and Kapileśvara at Mathura.

The popularity of the Śiva cult at Mathura is fully reflected in the sculptures of this school. We find that Śiva is represented in several forms as follows :—

1. Liṅga form of Śiva (*Liṅga-vigraha*) which is quite plain. [Fig. 172].

2. Ekamukhī Śiva-Liṅga, i. e. the Liṅga-form with a single human face. [Fig. 173].

3. Pañchamukhī Śiva Liṅga, i. e. the Liṅga form with four faces in the four directions and the fifth face on the top. Names of the five faces were Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha, Īśāna.[1] [Fig. 174].

4. Śiva standing against the Nandī Bull (the symbol of Kāma). [*Nandikeśvara* ; Fig. 175].

5. Śiva standing with Pārvatī by his side (Śiva-Pārvatī). In the images of Śiva-Pārvatī together Śiva is represented as Ūrdhva-reta (perfect Brahmachārī). [Fig. 176].

6. Ardhanārīśvara is shown in a composite image, right half shown as male and the left half female. [Fig. 177].

SŪRYA—An early image of Sūrya is depicted on a railing pillar at Bodhagayā (c. first century B. C.). Sūrya is seated in a chariot drawn by four horses and

1. Symbolism of these various images is stated in the *Vishṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa*.
(i) Sadyojāta—Prithivī, the latest form.
(ii) Vāmadeva—Jala (has been symbolised as female element).
(iii) Aghora—Agni.
(iv) Tatpurusha—Vāyu (air, most effective symbol of life).
(v) Īśāna—Ākāśa that overlords over all.
These have been represented in the five faces of Śiva. Liṅga is the symbol of creation, the universe, and the five faces represent the five elements.

he is dressed in a *dhotī*, scarf and turban. As against this we find in the early Kushāṇa art another form of Sūrya wearing coat and trousers which was the Indo-Scythian dress mentioned as the *udīchya-vesha*. The form of Sūrya was imported from Iran by the Scythians. The worship of the Sun-god under the name of Mitra, later on Mihira, was very popular in the Iranian religion. Mihira and Mah (Sun and Moon) were special deities honoured by the Parthians also. Both are represented on the coins of Kanishka. They were included in the list of the 27 Yazatas or deities. In the Kushāṇa period the elements of solar iconography are as follows :—

1. He is represented like a Kushāṇa emperor wearing the Northern dress consisting of a turban, coat fastened with a belt, trousers and boots. Sūrya is the only exception to wear boots. [Fig. 178].

2. He is seated in European fashion with legs suspended from his seat (*paryaṅkalīlāsana*).

3. He holds in the right hand a flower and in left hand a broad bladed dagger.

4. He is seated in a chariot drawn by two horses in the earliest images; the number of horses later being increased to four and lastly to seven.

We also have Sūrya images in standing posture but similar to the above so far as the dress and attributes are concerned. Gradually the dagger was replaced by a lotus and this became the standard type from Gupta period onwards for all the Sūrya images that were made.

5. Another special feature of Sūrya images during the Gupta period was the representation of his two attendants on each side, viz. Daṇḍa and Piṅgala. Piṅgala is shown holding a pen and ink-pot and Daṇḍa holding a staff in his hand. These images were further elaborated by the addition of the figures of attendant female goddesses, viz. Ūshā and Pratyushā taken from the Indian tradition and Rājñī and Nikshubhā were adopted from the Sasanian tradition under the two Sanskritised names.

KĀRTTIKEYA—Several good sculptures of Kārttikeya have been found at Mathura. The Kārttikeya cult seems to have been quite popular at Mathura during the Kushāṇa period. Besides Karttikeya several other forms like Kumāra, Vishākha, Skanda, and Mahāsena were worshipped. In the *Kāshyapa Saṁhitā*, Revatī Kalpa Chap., these four are said to be brothers of goddess Shashṭhī, whose fifth brother was Nandikeśvara (i.e. Śiva standing against the Nandī Bull). All these five are found depicted on the coins of Huvishika.

In the images Kārttikeya is shown as a two-armed figure, holding the right hand in *abhayamudrā* and Śakti in the left hand. Hence he was called Śaktidhara. Sometimes a cock and sometimes a peacock are depicted as his Vāhanas. An important

inscribed image of Kārttikeya has been found in a well at Mathura which shows that the model of the Karttikeya image was derived from the early standing Bodhisattva type in Kushāṇa art. [Fig. 179]. Kārttikeya became increasingly of greater importance until in the Gupta period he attained the status almost of a national deity, as is evident from the great epic-poem *Kumāra-sambhava* by Kālidāsa. The number of images also increased in the Gupta period. We also find the representation of Kumārī as one of the divine mothers.

GAṆEŚA—No image of Gaṇeśa of the Kushāṇa period has yet been fouud. In the earliest stage Gaṇeśa was only the type of a Yaksha, in which form he is depicted both in the early art of Amaravati and Mathura. In course of time the elephant-headed Yaksha developed in the form of Gaṇapati. In the Gupta period he was represented both as a squalling human figure with elephant's head and also in a dancing pose.

INDRA—In Buddhist iconography Indra and Brahmā occur as attendants of the Buddha. Sometimes Indra alone is shown paying homage to the Buddha in the Indraśaila Guhā at Rājagṛiha but in the Kushāṇa art of Mathura the iconography of Indra had a much greater significance. There is a unique image in which Indra is shown as polycephalous (having many heads) figure, i. e. with one figure in the centre and five others emerging out of his shoulders and head. [Fig. 180]. This should be identified as the representation of the *Pañchendra* form of this deity to whom detailed reference is found in the Pañchendropākhyāna of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. Indra is also depicted as Yaksha Vajrapāṇi, i. e. holding a thunderbolt in his hand. The one distinguished feature of Indra images is a high cap, rather a projecting crown, on his head. Sometimes a third eye is also shown over his forehead. [Fig. 181].

AGNI : In the Pañchāla coins of Agnimitra we always find a deity with a halo of flames. He is depicted on the Kushāṇa coins as an Iranian deity under the name of Athso. No image of the early Kushāṇa period has been found but there are several Gupta sculptures showing Agni as a Brāhmanical deity with a halo of flames round the body and also with *jaṭājūṭa*, a beard, *yajñopavīta*, potbellied and holding *amṛita-gaṭa* in the right hand.

LAKSHMĪ : Gaja-Lakshmī is already known in the art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhgaya and Udaigiri. At Mathura this ancient typical figure of Lakshmī continued to be depicted as female figure standing on a lotus, holding two lotuses in the two hands and with a pair of elephants sprinkling water on the head of the goddess with two inverted jars held in the two trunks. But the worship of Lakshmī as the goddess of plenty and prosperity became invariably popular so that freestanding images of the goddess in bigger size began to be made.

From certain reference in the epics of Aśvaghosha it appears that the more ancient goddess Māyā was replaced by the new goddess Śrī-Lakshmī. In several Kushāṇa statuettes Lakshmī and Hārītī are depicted side by side as the twin consorts of Kubera. [Fig. 182]. She was also later on shown as the wife of Gaṇeśa. The association of Lakshmī with Vishṇu is quite well known and was also recognised in earlier Kushāṇa art. The iconographic conception, however, became clear but by the Gupta period when she is depicted frequently as the consort of Vishṇu and is depicted as shampooing his feet in the Śeshaśāyī form.

DURGĀ—There are images of Durgā having four arms and seated on a lion assignable to the Kushāṇa period but the form, which was more popular, was that of Mahishāsuramardinī, i.e. goddess Durgā in the form of killing the demon. [Fig. 183]. Her images with two, four and six arms are found in considerable number in Kushāṇa and Gupta art. The most eloquent description of her exploits and power is contained in the Devī-Māhātmya of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. The worship of Mahishāsuramardinī became popular throughout the country and we find a magnificent representation of the conflict of the goddess riding on a lion with the demon Mahishāsura in the early Pallava art.

SAPTA-MĀTṚIKĀ—In the Kushāṇa period the worship of the female goddess of the form of Reality as so many goddesses found its most tangible expression as the sculptures representing a group of the Sapta-Mātṛikās (Seven Divine Mothers), Brahmāṇī, Vaishṇavī, Ambikā-Parvatī, Indrāṇī, Kaumārī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṁhī, and Chāmuṇḍā.[1] [Fig. 184].

1. These were the images of Śakti of the respective gods. As a matter of fact these were developed in the mystic symbolism of Yoga and depicted Śakties of various Chakras or nervous centres in the body. These were known as the Mātṛikās. Gradually their number increased to 8, 9, 10, 12 ond 16 (Shoḍaśa Mātṛikās). All these again were the varying symbols of an esoteric discipline of thought and meditation.

Fig. 182

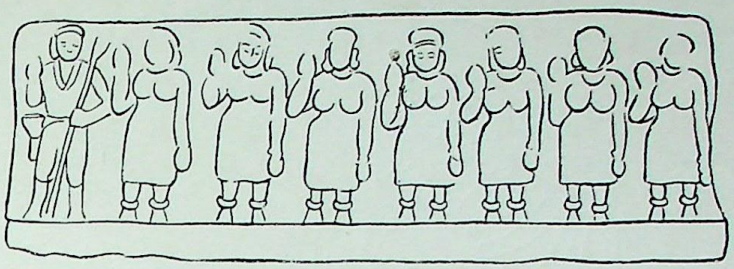


Fig. 184

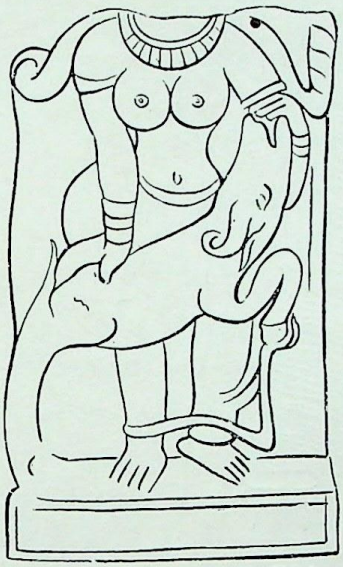


Fig. 183

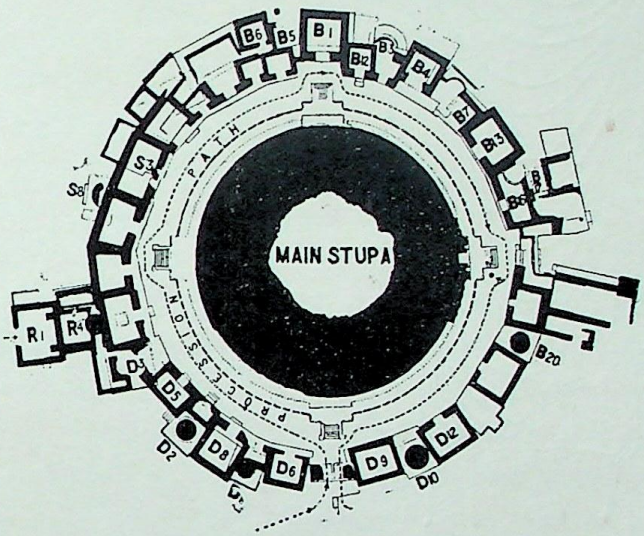


Fig. 185

Fig. 188

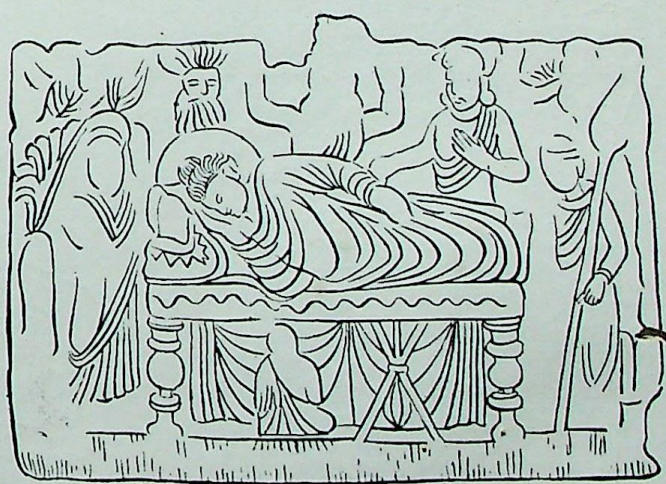


Fig. 189

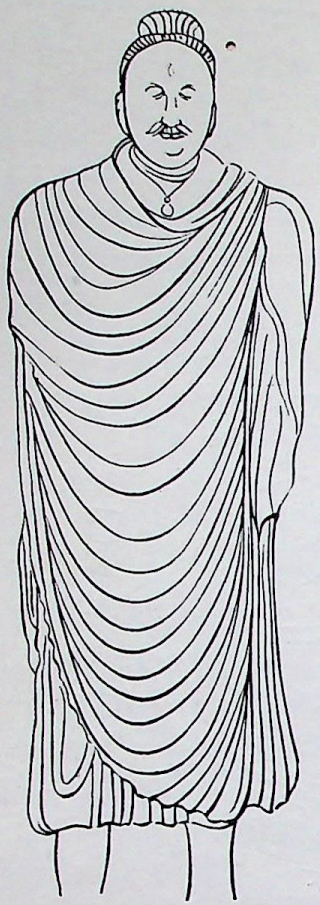


Fig. 186

Fig. 187

Fig. 191

Fig. 190

a

b

c

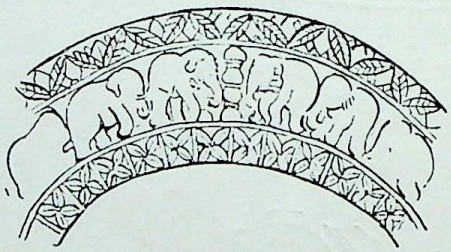
d

Fig. 192

a

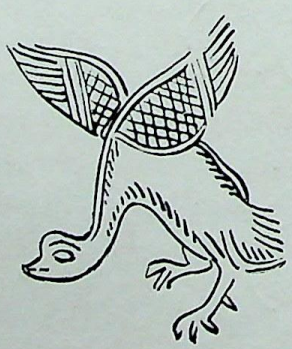
b

Fig. 193



c

e



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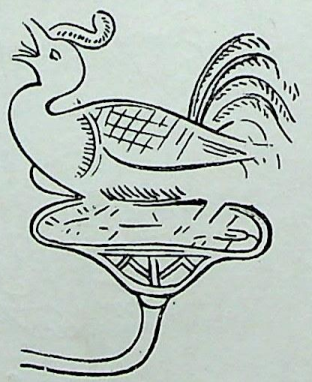


g

Fig. 192

CHAPTEK XI.

11. GANDHĀRA ART

The geographical name Gandhara first occurs in the Ṛigveda in the form *gandhārīṇām* i.e. of the residents of Gandhara. The Atharvaveda repeats the form *Gandhāri* but the Aitareya and Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas mention it as Gāndhāra, an epithet of Nagnajit, a name mentioned in the list of Śilpa Schools. The name is repeated in the Chhāndogya Upanishad as Gandhāra marking the western point of a route leading up to eastern India. Pāṇini gives its form as Gāndhāri (IV. 1.169). The river Indus divided this wide Janapada into two portions, the eastern Pūrva-Gandhāra, with capital at Taxila in Rawalpindi district and the western Apara Gandhāra, with capital at Pushkalāvatī (Peucelaotes of the Greeks ; modern Charsadda) a city on the junction of the Swat with the Kabul river which finally meets the Indus. Cunningham gives the boundaries of Gandhāra as having Laghman (ancient, Lampāka) and Jalalabad (Nagarahāra) to the west, the mountains of Swat and Buner to the north, the Indus to the east and the mountains of Kalabagh to the south. In some places the name Udyāna was applied to Gandhāra but actually the appellation Uḍḍīyāna mentioned in the Jātaka (IV. 352) was applied to the mountainous country between the Swat and the Panjkora rivers. Thus the three river valleys of the Swat, Kabul and the Indus formed the main Gandhāra region. The importance of this region was derived from the ancient route called Uttarapatha which connected Mathura, Śākala, Taxila, Pushkalāvatī, Nagarahāra, Kāpiśī and Bāhlīka. There was an ancient route connecting Udbhāṇḍa (Ohinda on the Indus), Shahbajgarhi, Hoti Mardan, and Charsaddha. In the time of Kanishka a new route running from Peshawar direct east up to the Indus was diverted. But all the ancient sites continued to form part of the ancient Gandhāra region. From Pushkalāvatī on the ancient route and Peshawar on the modern the route continued via Jallalabad (anc., Nagarahāra) and the adjacent site of Hadda and thence to Kāpiśī and through the Bamiyan valley and Phondukistan to Hebak and through Bactria to Termez. This was the vast basin for the extension of Gandhāra art in which seven distinct areas may be recognised as follows: 1. Taxila, 2. Pushkalāvatī, 3. Nagarahāra, 4. Swat Valley or Uḍḍīyāna, 5. Kāpiśī, 6. Bamiyan, 7. Bactria. Takshaśilā, also known as Bhadraśilā, now in Rawlpindi district, was the eastern capital of Gandhāra and virtually the biggest centre of art and civilisation. In the Gandhāra school of art of stone sculptures made of schist we had two great sites, viz. Hadda and Taxila. At Taxila there were three main sites, viz. Bhir, Sircap and Sirsukh placed from south to north, and under three

successive occupations, viz. ancient Taxila, Greko-Parthian and Kushāṇa times. Taxila was included in the Achaemenian empire of Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes, in the 5th century B. C.; then under the Maedonian rule of Alexander and finally ceded by Seleukos to Chandragupta Maurya. After the Mauryas it came successively under the influence of the Greko-Bactrians, Śakas or Scythians, Pahlavas or Parthians and Kushāṇas between third century B. C. to second century A. D. The Bhir mound is placed by Sir John Marshall between 6–7th century B. C. to the time of Alexander. This site was pre-Greek in origin and has produced two hoards of punchmarked coins and a treasure containing two pieces of Alexander the great and one of Philip Aridaeus, showing the head of Alexander with a lion's mask on one side and on the reverse Zeus seated on his throne. Amongst the minor antiquities of the Bhir mound are earthenware vessels of many varieties; small reliefs, stamped medallions and toys of terracottas; stone saucers and dishes; toilet and other articles of bone, ivory and copper; gold and bronze ornaments; iron implements and domestic utensils; beads and gems; coins; and other miscellaneous articles.

The second site at Taxila was Sircap beginning in the second century B. C. with the conquest of the Panjab by Greko-Bactrians and which continued under the Greek, Śaka, Pahlava and Kushāṇa king up to Vema Kadphises. The excavations have exposed at Jandiyal an Iranian temple and two Ionian columns. This Zoroastrian shrine seems to have been the work of Parthian rulers.

After the close of the Sircap period the next site at Taxila was at Sirsukh constructed probably under the reign of Kanishka to a date approximately up to 200 A.D. The citadel at Sirsukh placed inside the valley is rectangular with walls formed of diaper masonry and semi-circular bastions which are hollow on the ground and top level with a flat terrace on the inside holes in the walls for shooting. The remains inside Sirsukh belong to a large palace but nearby at Badalpur a Stūpa of Kushāṇa times and at Lalchak another late Stūpa of semi-ashlar masonry with coins of the white Huṇa were found.

In the neighbourhood of Sirsukh are two memorable Stūpas, viz. of sacrified Head (*Śirodāna Stūpa* of which the story is told in the *Divyāvadāna*) and a Stūpa of Kuṇāla with the legend that it was constructed by Aśoka to commemorate the place where his son Kuṇāla had given his eyes and which now survives as a three-terraced Stūpa showing a lofty rectangular base (63′9″ × 105′) approached by a flight of steps at its northern end and relieved by 'a series of stunted Corinthian pilasters resting on an elaborate "torus and scotia" moulding and formerly surmounted by a dentil cornice and copings, with brackets of the "notched" variety intervening between the capitals and the cornice.'

In the viccinity of Taxila are the monuments at Mohrā Morādu, Pippala and Jaulian the best preserved and the most striking in the North West. At Mohra Moradu is a monastery with several Stūpas ornamented with reliefs in stucco. Numerous coins of Huvishka and Vāsudeva were discovered in the foundation of the monastery. Another monastery with Stūpas exactly semilar to those of Mohrā Morādu was found at Jauliān belonging to the Kushāṇa period. The Stūpas at Jauliān are richly ornamented with stucco figures of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas with worshippers, grotesque Yakshas serving as atlantes in friezes, female figure with children and attendants.

At Pippala two monasteries one of Kushāṇa date and another of fourth century A. D. and a Stūpa were found, the last monument is decorated with Ionian pilasters alternating with lotus rosettes.

The most important of the monuments at Taxila is the Dharmarājikā Stūpa or Chīr Tope so-called from the cleft driven through it. The main structure is circular at the base with a raised terrace, which was ascended by four flights of steps on the four sides. The core of the Stūpa is of rough rubble masonry with radiating walls three to five feet in thickness which were added during Kushāṇa times. The outer facing of the Stūpa is made of big limestone blocks (*aśmaśilā*) with chiselled kañjūr stone let in between them for the mouldings and pilasters. The whole was at one time finished with a thick coating of lime plaster. The face of the Stūpa above the berm was covered with ornamental stone carving distinguished by the boldness of its mouldings and the design of the niches which are framed aternately with trefoil arches and portals with sloping jambs, and separated from one another by Corinthian pilasters. The niches once had figures of the Buddha or of the Bodhisattvas in relief. The original Dharmarājikā Stūpa was first erected in the reign of Aśoka, then enlarged as a *Maheśākhya* Stūpa in the time of the Śaka kings and finally finished of with kañjūr stones probably in the fifth century. The raised terrace around the foot of the Stūpa once served as a *pradakshiṇāpatha* which was laid in three layers ; the uppermost one composed of slabs af dark grey stone ; the second one immediately below the first of glass tiles and below it a chūnam floor, below which was a pavement of river sand mixed with lime, which was adorned in a curious fashion with shell bangles embedded in the plaster and arranged in different geometrical designs, some of the bangles being whole, others cut in halves or in quarters.

On the eastern side of the Stūpa immediately to the left of the steps is the lower part of a pillar, which probably once supported a lion capital like the pillars in Sircap. [Fig. 185].

The Great Stūpa was the first of the Buddhist structures to be erected on the plateau of Taxila. It was surrounded by a number of smaller Stūpas dating from the

Śaka period (1st century B. C.) which were originally circular in plan and constructed of rough rubble cores. When these fell into ruins around the Great Stūpa were erected a number of small chapels for Buddhist images which were set up facing the Great Stūpa in a distinctive style of masonry known as diaper. Over these shrines were constructed others in later masonry in which ashlar and diaper patterns were combined, i. e. semi-ashlar in which a single course of ashlar was usually inserted between the larger boulders of the diaper, and which was in vogue in the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries A. D. 'Thus, we have three clear and distict type of masonry around the main Stūpa : first, the rubble and kañjūr work of the Śaka period, secondly, the neat diaper which came into fashion with the Parthians during the first century A. D. ; and thirdly the semi-ashlar, semi-diaper type of the late second and subsequent centuries.' These three consecutive types are equally well illustrated in other buildings at the Dharmarājikā Stūpa as well as in Sircap and other places'. (Marshall). Minor antiquities from these chapels are in stucco and terracotta, all of later times.

The Great Stūpa of Taxila had also its monastery with a large courtyard having a row of cells on four sides together with a refectory and a kitchen. A number of such combined monuments with a circular Stūpa and a squar Vihāra continued to be built up to the time of Yuan Chwang. The whole valley is dotted with these ruined monuments.

On the ancient route were situated Shahbajgarhi, Hoti-Mardan and finally Pushkalāvatī (mod. Charsadda). Kālidāsa has mentioned Takshaśilā and Pushkalāvatī as two capitals of Gandhāra the people of which region were known as the Gandharvas in the Gupta period. The site is more commonly known as Hashṭanagar where a well known pedestal of Hārītī image dated in the year 384 of an unknown era was found. The another site in viccinity is Balahisar where the Stūpa of the Gift of the Eyes or the Kuṇāla Stūpa has been identified by Foucher and some coins of Kanishka and as well as a statuette in schist were found. At Mir-ziarat some coins of Menander, Hermaios, Azes and a coin of Kanishka with Buddha on reverse were found. At Palṭūḍherī was found the Buddha of Hashṭanagar and many other bas-reliefs showing the Dīpaṅkara Jātaka, Abhinishkramaṇa and statues of Buddha and Bodhisattva. North of Charsadda was a belt of ancient monuments, e. g. at Skara-ḍheri was the Stūpa of Hārītī where an image dated in the year 319 was found. At Sahri-bahlol which was an ancient site in a line to the east of Hārītī Stūpa was found a Stūpa with decoration showing a series of seated Buddhas in stucco between Indo-Corithian pillars and also atlantes and elephants. [Fig. 186]. Many freestanding sculptures and Buddhist statues including scenes from Buddha's life, Birth, Enlightenment, First Sermon, Parinirvāṇa, Casting of Horoscope by Asita, Dīpaṅkara Jātaka, Conversion of Kāśyapa, Submission of Nalagiri, Kubera and Hārītī and statues of Bodhisattva were found in situ.

[Figs. 187-90]. They belong to a period where the artistic traditions of the school were in full vigour including some which are decadent. The stone statues are older than the stuccos. Amongst them Foucher recognised the grand miracle of Śravāstī, Conversion of Elāpatra Nāga, Dīpaṅkara and Vessantara Jātakas, Ṛishiśṛiṅga, and Buddha seated on a lotus-throne supported by two elephants.

North of Sahri-bahlol is Takht-e-bahi of which the ancient name is unknown, where the Stūpas and Vihāras with colossal statues have been found which include numerous statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, life-scenes and Jātaka scenes and also bas-reliefs of Kubra and Hārītī. To the south of Charsadda below the Kabul river is Shah-ji-ki-dheri on the new route where the excavations have exposed a monument identified with the grand Stūpa of Kanishka. In its relic chamber was discovered the reliquary of Kanishka made of 'gilt copper alloy cylinder and lid, of total height of $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches. On the lid are a seated nimbate Buddha and Indra and Brahmā, around the rim a series of *haṁsas* with extended wings ; and on the cylinder are seated Buddhas, a representation of Kanishka, and the sun and moon deities, with garland-bearing Erotes. The inscription mentions the names of Kanishka and Agiśala, the Greek craftsman by whom it was made.' [Fig. 191].

To the west of Peshawar on the main Uttarapatha route was the important site of Nagarhar (modern Jalalabad) where a gold reliquary was found inside a Stūpa at Bimran, which was contained in an inscribed steatite vase of the 1st cent. A. D. The most important site was Hadda where Stūpas with sculptures in schist and in stucco have been discovered and where on Gandhāra art strong Hellenistic influences have been observed. Here the Stūpas in brick or stone are very ancient followed by such of them as were later on encased by stucco work. Bartho has classified them as firstly cylindrical Stūpas with the lower cubical portion surmounted by a dome ; secondly the Stūpa constituted solely by two or three cylindrical portions and finally two octagonal bodies are joined to a cylindrical portion. In the decoration of the Stūpa the lotus flower is a frequent motif as well as bas-relief and freizes. In the building of the Stūpas schist was used, as a matter of course on the basis of continued tradition as well as brick, both of which were ancient. Stūpas in schist reveted by bricks show campaniform and Corinthian capitals with a single terrace, and also Stūpas in schist with rough ashlar masonry faced with stucco work and having several terraces with a cylindrical form. The Stūpas solely in schist recall by their forms those of Sanchi, but they are gradually replaced by those which have a slender form and receding lines of several stages, which show a Hellenistic interpretation of Indian Stūpas. Bartho has observed several features of these Stūpas, viz. the elegance of lines in the receding superimposed work, sobriety of decorations, reminiscence of Persian order, predominance of the Greek order, mainly Corinthian, rapidity of execution,

gradual introduction of the fantastic elements, bordering upon the grotesque in architectural decoration. There is difference of opinions about the chronology of this school, but it was flourishing from the second to the fifth century A. D. and the monuments seem to have been destroyed by the White Huns.

The next site on the grand route was Kāpiśī (mod. Begram), north of Hindukush, commanding the passes of India and Bactria, which was known to Pāṇini about the 5th cent. B C. and also to Kauṭilya, the latter mentioning its famous wines. At this site a number of carved ivory plaques which formed parts of treasure-chests or toilet-cases of women, were found, which are inspired both by the art style of India on the one hand and Hellenistic world on the other. Of true Indian inspiration are scenes of *Aśoka-dohada* showing a woman touching the Aśoka tree with her left foot and having the same kind of spiral mass of head-dress as seen in similar figures at Mathura and Amaravati. *Prasādhikā*, wearing a heavy necklace (*Karatala-sthita sthūla-hāra-yashṭi*, *Kādambarī*, Vaidya edn. para 80), toilet-scene (*Prasādhana*), dancing scene, drinking scene, flying geese, *Śalākā-vātāyana* derived from *Padma-vara-vedikā* type, *Pūrṇa-ghaṭa*, *Haṁsa-Krīḍā* or woman coaxing the Haṁsa bird with a lotus. Again in 1939-40, during a second excavation, many more plaques were discovered, showing *toraṇa* gateways with three architraves similar in style to those on the *Āyāgapaṭṭas* of Mathura with toileting scenes of women holding mirror and waterpot, pillars surmounted by animal capitals and inverted jars, row of elephants in the spaces between architraves recalling the elephants on the façade of the Lomas Ṛishi cave and a good number of other scenes of dance, music and domestic pastimes marked by much greater Indianisation similar to the Śālabhañjikā women on Mathura railing pillars. [Figs. 192-3]. Special attention may be invited to four scenes depicted on the obverse and reverse of plaques No. 46 and 49 (of Hackin's Report) in which a woman is wringing water from her long braid, which a Haṁsa bird is drinking with its beak (*Keśanistoyakāriṇī mudrā*), exactly similar to that on Mathura railing pillar No. M. M. 1509. On several plaques we find drinking scenes showing an intoxicated woman helplessly falling on the ground in half-kneeling attitude supported by her female companions recalling the Bacchanalian group of Maholi. Women playing on flute, or standing under Aśoka tree (*Aśoka dohada* scene showing the woman kicking the Aśoka tree with her right foot), a guardian holding a long lance, Full Vase, *Vyāla-toraṇa* brackets showing women riding on winged leoglyphs, capitals showing addorsed lions with male and female riders, fish-tailed tritons (*Mahoraga*). It is impressive to find in these plaques not only subjects of Indian inspiration but also the same plastic sensuality as is familiar on the pillars of Mathura railing. It is very probable that this school of ivory carving for which such profuse evidence has been supplied by Begram, originally flourished at Mathura during the Kushāṇa period.

Kāpiśī seems to have been the place where the east and the west mingled in a cultural session of great beauty, for we have found here a number of glass vases, painted and cut, representing the best art of the Roman world, goblets, one of them showing the combat between Achilles and Hector (Hackin II, fig. 261), big and small wine-jars (ibid. figs. 250-251), pots, bowls, jars, a conical goblet, with painted scenes of Ganymede being carried by the Eagle of Zeus and also Europa being lifted by a bull (ibid, figs. 264-265), phials, fish-shaped flasks, cups and saucer, all in very fine glass; a number of circular medallions in plaster showing beautiful Roman heads of male and female figures and Bacchanalian scenes (ibid, figs. 274, 378), bronze plaques, plates, discs, a mask of Silenus (ibid., fig. 329), mirrors, chests and statuettes; figures of porphyry, gold, iron and pottery, etc. In them we are face to face with the rich art creations of Roman workshops that were brought to Kāpiśī to serve the purpose mostly of wine-trade from where the flavoury drinks known as *Kāpiśāyana-madhu* were imported in to India even so early as the Mauryan times. For about five hundred years Kāpiśī maintained its reputations as an emporium of trade supplied with the best articles of art and beauty from India and from Rome. The artistic inspiration of Mathura on the Begram ivories is so patent that their Indian fabrication cannot be doubted, as Goloubew concluded.

Two other sites in the cluster of Kāpiśī are Paitāwā where in 1925 a Buddha image was found, and Khair Khaneh, twelve miles north of Kabul, where in 1936, a Brāhmanical temple with the statue of Sūrya in white marble was exposed. Sūrya is squatting in *lalitāsana* between his acolytes Daṇḍa and Piṅgala, on a chariot drawn by two horses between whom sits the charioteer Aruṇa shown without legs and holding the reins. He is wearing the costume of the Sassanian kings of 4th cent. A.D. This was the grand epoch of the worship of the Sun god in the Oriental world to which numerous references are found in the Purāṇas and testified by the actual monument. Hackin observed that this was the first Brāhmanical temple in this area showing architectural and iconographical similarity between Khair-khaneh and Gupta art, specially of Bhūmrā.

As we move westwards on the Grand Route of *Uttarapatha* we come to the next cluster of site in the Bamiyan Valley and Fondukistan. The colossal rock-cut Buddha statues, one of 35 meters and the other of 53 meters are cut in the rock with many grottoes in the background and vicinity, with numerous fresco-paintings showing strong Ajanta influences. The paintings also exhibit Central Asian and Sassanian influences. It has been suggested that originally the first art influences that Bamiyan got were Indian which were gradually superimposed by motifs, costumes and styles from Iran and Central Asia. Mani is said to have received his education of painting in Bamiyan.

The Bamiyan Valley was the gateway to Gandhāra and the magnificent statues and paintings executed here in the mountain were intended to inspire the visitors from Iran, Rome, Central Asia and China with faith and wonder about India in those ages.

From Bamiyan the Grand Route took a turn to the north and terminated in Bāhlīka and Termez on the Oxus, which should be studied in a purview of Gandhāra art. On the way a little to the east is Haibak, where there is a monolithic Stūpa carved on the same principle as the monolithic Śaiva temple at Ellora. Possibly the initiative of such grand monolithic monuments came from here to India. Here was a Buddhist foundation complete with a Stūpa with a Saṁghārāma ; the latter composed of chapels, a dormitory, and a dining hall or refectory for the community of Buddhist monks. One finds similar disposition in the caves at Daraunta near Jalalabad.

The most important site was Bactria, situated midway between Afghanistan and Turkistan and lying to the south of Oxus. Its ancient name was Bāhlīka, or Bāhlāyanī of Patañjali. It was an international site where four great routes, viz. from India, Iran, Scythia and China, met. The archaeological researches in Bactriana have shown it to be a veritable crusible of art and culture. Its principal sites are Bactria (modern, Mazar-i-Sharif), Kunduz, Khulm, Andkhui and Termez on the Oxus (ancient Tarmita of the *Vinaya-sūtra-ṭīkā* and *Ta-mi* of Yuan Chwang). Bactria was the country of Bāhlīka-Yavanas and art remains of Indian inspiration have been mostly negative so far. The undoubted Buddhist monument is the *Nava-Vihāra* monastery which dates from the time of Vāsudeva or one of his immediate successors. The site of Kunduz was the real cradle of Graeco-Buddhist art where a number of statues and a temple of Jandial type of Taxila was found which led Foucher to think that the area from Kunduz to Taxila was the home-land of the Gandhāra art in its two versions, one with emphasis on Hellenistic elements and the other on Indian elements.

Kunduz on a tributary of the Oxus was the site of British and French archaeological excavations and also the scene of activity of Soviet archaeologists. There coins of the Bactrian Greeks and of Kushāṇas were found. Here art specimens of the earliest Hellenistic type have been discovered including Graeco-Buddhist statuettes bearing strong Hellenistic influence. The stucco examples at Kunduz recall those of Hadda and are strongly hellenised and Greek influences are much accentuated. Here a treasure was found in the Oxus river containing objects of gold and silver which show the influence of Iran and the art of the Steppes, in particular the animal art of the Scythians. Some animal designs as the fawn are similar to those of Bactria and Sogdiana and the lions and the tigers bearing the designs of the regions of the lower Oxus which enjoyed wide defusion. The reminiscences of Greek art found

in these objects travelled from the Greek colonies in Asia Minor to the ends of Scythian tribes along the Black Sea and South Russia. It was a centre of wide distribution of art motifs of Greek origin towards China and Mongolia. It was from the 2nd cent. A. D. to 4-5th cent. when Indian influences permeated the art objects at Kunduz, espeacially medallions of lotus flowers with petals on the borders. A scene depicting the *Śaśa-jātaka* has been identified here and another perhaps representing Śiva.

Termez on the north bank of the Oxus was an important outpost of Graeco-Buddhist art where French and Russian delegations have come across much valuable material which adds a new page to the history of Gandhāra art during the first two cent. of the Christian era. Here a Buddhist temple was found which has been assigned to the 1st cent. A. D., and is of the same type as the Stūpas in Gandhāra. At secondary sites near Termez were found fragments of statuettes of Bodhisattvas, human figures of horse-riders wearing northern dress, a very fine piece of the base of a column, and fragments of pottery and vases of glazed earth.

At Airtan eight big fragments of a grand frieze were found which had adorned the outer walls of a building, possibly a Buddhist temple. Half-figures of youths and girls, musicians and garland-bearers are depicted on the frieze between acanthus leaves. In spite of elements of Greek and Indian art, the frieze, as a whole, breathes with a style and technique of its own, which shows that there was a local school of art in Termez.

In the vicinity of Termez an ancient Buddhist monastery, comprising a number of artistically decorated caves and various constructions of the pre-Christian and Christian times have come to light. At Termez itself, excavations revealed a colossal palace with richly ornamented stairways, decorative medallions, and fantastic stucco work in the side pavilions which is 'a marvel of Oriental art'. Fuller notices of this material are yet awaited.

The subject of this notable frieze was inspired by essentially an Indian conception, viz. the *Kāma-latā*, i.e. the creeper producing the beautiful sons and daughters of the God of Love. Indian versions of this motif were rendered on the door-jambs of the Gupta temples in the form of *Mithuna* bands but the motif was much older and derived from the wish-fulfilling trees (*Kalpa-vṛiksha*) of Uttarakuru whose boughs produced such Mithunas or young men and women (*ante* 142-6). It appears as if the colossus of Kushāṇa rule under Kanishka had planted its one foot at Mathura and the other in Khwaresm.

In the Autonomous Karakalpakia Republic of Khwaresm, one of the most impressive monuments has been found at Toprak Kala showing a palace with a

"Hall of Kings" containing many groups of sculptures, some of them very well preserved, representing, according to Tolstov, the kings of ancient Khwaresm surrounded by their women and court dignitaries. The statues are made of unbaked clay and are painted ; the faces are very realistic and are, undoubtedly portraits. In two niches in the "hall of kings" (lit. *Devakula*) were found big (almost double the natural size) statues of men in sitting posture with three to five other statues of men, women and children standing around them. In the centre of the palace is the "alabaster hall", not far from two other festival halls, with walls covered with moulded and carved alabaster. Near this were found the "hall of victory" whose walls were adorned with sculptural representations of sitting kings and portrayals of 'Goddesses of Victory', and the "hall of Warriors" with images of the heroes of Khwaresm in coats of iron scale mail with reed shields. In addition to the sculptures of considerable artistic and historical value, there are pictures of monumental character, with ornamental and figurative decorations, veritable genre pictures, women gathering grapes and peaches into their aprons, musicians, tigers, horses, birds, etc. These wall paintings were made with mineral paints on clay plastering. This part of Khwaresm was under the rule of Kanishka in the 1st cent. A. D. and many fortresses were built here for Kushāṇa garrison which kept watch over the northern borders of the kingdom. In one of such buildings at the frontier fortress of Gyaur-Kala in a big square hall were found the remains of wall paintings. Each wall having a niche in the middle and ceiling supported by columns with excellently profiled stone-bases. This architectural feature at once recalls the similar stone pillar-bases (*kumbhaka*), a number of which were found in the Huvishka monastery at Mathura and are now preserved in the Museum there (M. M. P 21—P 53). Near this hall was found a sculpture giving firm links with Mathura art. It is a clay sculpture of man's head, somewhat bigger than natural size, being one of the best specimens of portrait sculpture from Khwaresm showing a young man wearing a peaked hat known as *Tigra-khauda*, which was popular amongst the Scythians and of which half a dozen specimens have been found at Mathura. This art belonged to the Tochari, an ancient people who first lived along the Oxus and subsequently moved in to Bactria, overthrowing the Macedonian rule there in the 2nd cent. B. C. They formed a kingdom on the basis of which Bactria came to be known as Tocharistan, i. e. the kingdom of the Tushāras or the Kushāṇas.

This was a veritable *Devakula* similar to that at Māṭ near Mathura but on a much grander scale which fell into ruins in the fifth-sixth century A. D. under the impact of the White Huṇs and Altai Turks.

These specimens were produced in a complex of diverse influences, viz. Indian, Central Asian, Chinese, Iranian and Mediterranean.

Problems of chronology, iconography and æsthetic achivements of the Gandhāra School are naturally of very great significance in the history of Indian art. The dated images are only four, the era of which is very uncertain. But taking 129 B. C. as the first year of an older Śaka era as the basis of reckoning, the dates of 384 (statue of Hashtnagar), 318 (Buddha of Loiryan-Tangai), 399 (Hārītī from Skarah-ḍheri) and 89 in the new era (Buddha image from Mamani-dheri), all tend to show that the Gandhāra school flourished in the second cent. A. D. It were really the Kushāṇa emperors, Vema, Kanishka and others under whom the Gandhāra school reached its highest perfection like its contemporary school of Mathura. While the Mathura sculptors have given us several hundred inscriptions those working in Gandhara atliers did not realise there responsibility, although working under western influences they should have acquitted themselves in a better historical frame of mind. However, the general limits of chronology are firm, viz. 1st cent. A. D. to 3rd cent. A. D. for stone sculpture and the 4th and 5th cent. for work in stucco.

This range is supported by the coins deposited in the foundations of the most of the monuments and also as they were in loose circulation in the regions enumerated above and lying to the south-east and the north-west of Hindukush. A firm point in the chronology of Gandhāra is now furnished by the trilingual Aśokan inscription found near Kandhar. The first period of creativity of the school came to an end about 250 A. D. when the Sassanians conquered the country. With the arrival of the Kidāra Kushāṇas from Bactria about 390 A. D. Gandhāran art entered on a new phase of creative activity in stucco medium. This coincided with the art of the Gupta period in India and is distinguished by a unique flowering of Indian motifs and style.

At Sākala there were once in oocupation the *Madraka-Yavanas* or Indo-Greeks who had brought with them hellenised ways of life, art and culture and left behind legacy which was not effaced in subsequent times but gradually absorbed by the population which was mainly Indian.

In fixing a chronology for Gandhāra art much depends on the date of Kanishka for which we have accepted c. 78 A. D. as marking the beginning of the Śaka Era of which Kanishka was the founder (?).

An important question for this school is the origin of the Buddha image for which many western writers have argued. But it remains a mere hypothesis for which no firm proof has been adduced. We have shown in our study of Mathura school, that the Buddha image originated at Mathura as an out-come of the combination of the Chakravartī and Yogī ideals, that not a single element of Buddhist iconography like the Padmāsana, Dhyāna-mudrā, Nāsāgra-dṛishṭi, Siṁhāsana, Chāmaragrāhiṇī, divine figures showering flowers, Ūrṇā, Ushṇīsha, has any meaning in Greek and Iranian

mythology. A western origin of the Buddha image in Gandhāra cannot therefore be admitted in any manner. The Yaksha-Bodhisattva formula of the Mathura School has no parallel in Gandhāra. Only a distinct type of Buddha image with whiskers, both seated and standing statues wearing sandals, appeared in Gandhāra but from the point of view of its spiritual expression it is so inferior that no school of art would claim any credit for it.

Iconographically the art of Gandhara accepted the life-story of Buddha, images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Jātaka scenes, Hellenistic scenes and gods and goddesses, other Indian male and female deities, foreign architectural elements, Indian decorative motifs and miscellaneous figures and designs from Iran, Bactria and India. The life-scenes of Buddha mostly in bas-reliefs are exceptionally rich in Gandharan art, unexcelled by many other centres of Buddhist art in India or elsewhere. The range of subjects and the variety of their representation have been treated with great zest as shown in the following list of the life-scenes :—

Dream of Māyādevī, Interpretation of Dream, conception of Māyā, Departure of Māyā from Kapilavastu, Birth of Buddha, Birth of Chhandaka and Kanthaka, First Seven Steps after Birth, First Bath, Return to Kapilavastu and Prediction of Asita, Siddhārtha as Bodhisattva, schooling of Bodhisattva, Siddhārtha's competition in writing, wrestling and archery, bridal procession, Marriage of Bodhisattva with Yaśodharā, God's exhortation to Siddhārta to renounce the world, life-scenes in the palace, Sleepiug women, Renunciation (Abhinishkramaṇa), Farewell of Kanthaka, Chhandaka receiving turban and jewel, visit of King Bimbisāra, Exchange of robes with the hunter, cult of the Turban, First Meditation, Penances, worship of Nāga Kālika, offering of a handful of grass, fasting Boddhisattva, march to the Sambodhi, assault of Māra and temptation by his daughters, Sambodhi or Enlightenment, two merchants offer food to the Buddha, offering of the four cups, gods requesting Buddha for preaching of his law, Indra and Brahmā entreat to Buddha to preach, the First Sermon, miracle of fire before Kāśyapa at Uruvilva, Buddha and the black serpent in the fire temple of Uruvilva, Buddha presenting the serpent to Kāśyapa, Visit to Kapilavastu and ordination of Rāhula, story of Nanda and Sundarī, criminal attempts of Devadatta, Anāthapiṇḍada presents the Jetavana park at Śravastī to Buddha, submission of elephant Nalagiri, Jyotishka saved from the fire, conversion of Yaksha Āṭavika, descent from the heaven of thirty-three gods, invitation of Śrīgupta and Grahadatta, offering of a handful of dust (*pāṁsu-pradāna*), offering of honey by monkeys, anger of the white dog at the Buddha, conversion of Aṅgulimāla, submission of the Nāga King Apalāla, infant of the mortal woman, consolation of Ānanda, visit of Indra and Pañchaśikha Gandharva, Ambapālī presenting Buddha with a mango grove, Grand Miracle of

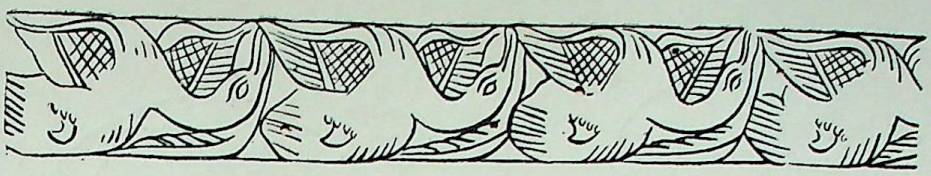


Fig. 192 i

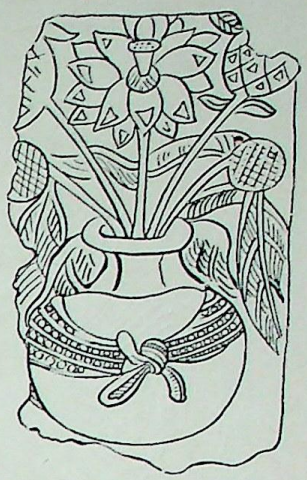


Fig. 192 h

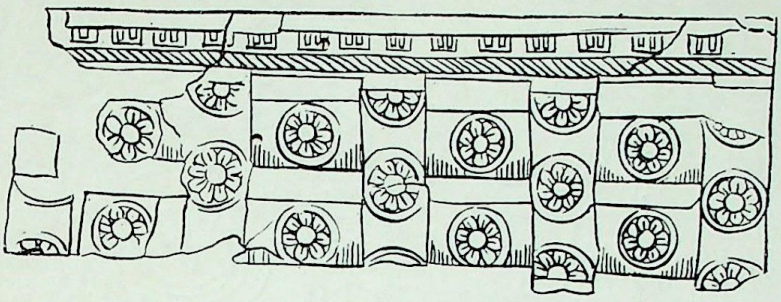


Fig. 192 j

Fig. 195 c

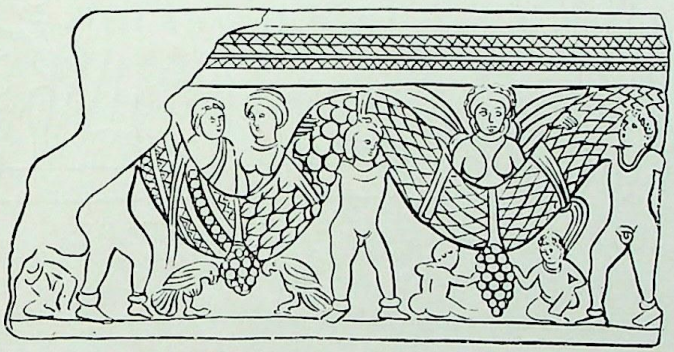


Fig. 195 a

Fig. 196

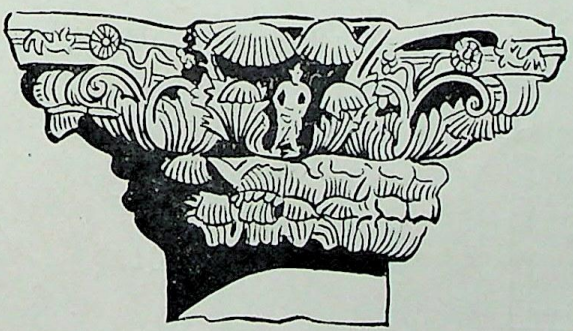


Fig. 195 b

Fig. 194

Fig. 200

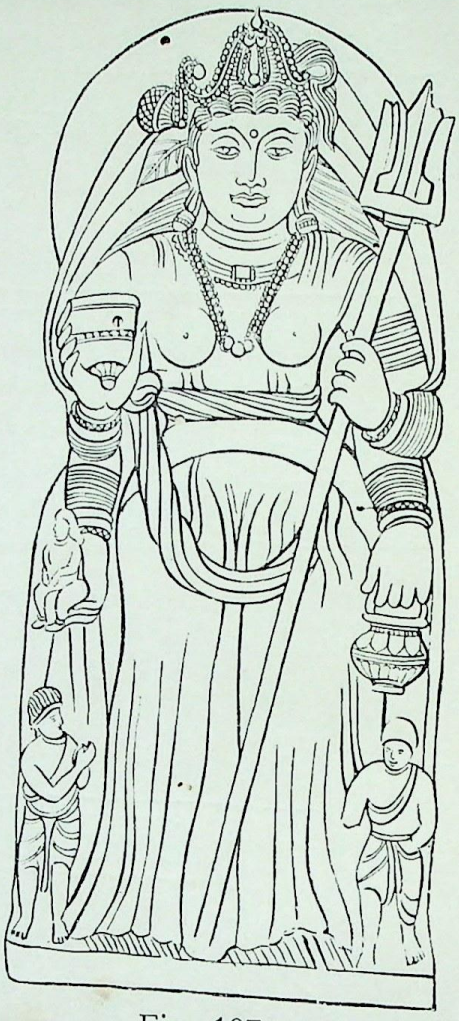


Fig. 197

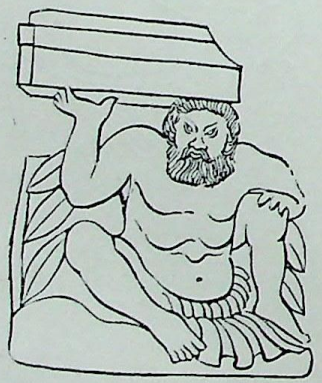


Fig. 199

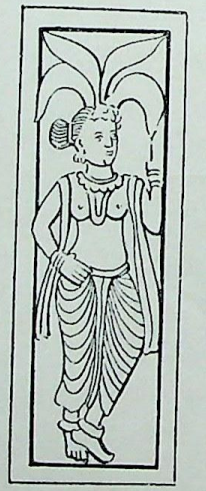


Fig. 198

Fig. 201

Śaāvastī, Mahāparinirvāṇa (Great Decease), coffin of Buddha, the cremation, division and transportation of relics on elephant's back, cult of the relics, cult of triratna.

It is evident from the surviving Gandhara sculpture that the school was extremely prolific and that the sculptors and the donors were really interested in depicting the life-stories of the master and achieving a high quality of artistic expression to the best of their ability. The scenes are crowded with a number of subsidiary figures bold in execution or full of sympathetic understanding as in the scene showing the kneeling horse Kanthaka taking leave of his master. The fasting Buddha reduced to a skeleton is not only anatomically true but also a moving picture of austere ascetism. The seated Buddha figure nimbate, with heavy drapery with thick folds covering both shoulders (*Uṁhayāṁsika*) with hands in *dhyāna-mudrā*, extrovert eyes, short whiskers, is a distinctive type of Gandhara art. Allied to this are a number of standing Buddha figures wearing thick-folded *Saṁghāṭī* over the two usual garments. In the case of preaching Buddha the drapery covers only the left shoulder (*akāṁsika*), the right shoulder being left bare. The faces generally are happy and fully absorbed in the scenes in which the figures are depicted. The Buddha presenting the serpent to Kāśyapa is a fine example (from Sahari Bahlol, Peshawar Museum No. 1373) in very high relief. Amongst Bodhisattvas Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara are depicted in Gandhara art but Gautama himself has a two-fold form in his Bodhisattva stage; firstly, when he was a prince in royal palace wearing ornaments and royal costumes, and secondly, after his renunciation until enlightenment wearing the monk's dress. Amongst standing Buddhas are some remarkable sculptures ranging in height from 4′ to 8′ (now preserved in Lahore and Peshawar Museums which are of a monumental quality. They are from Sahri Bahlol, Takt-i-Bahi and other places. A colossal statue of standing Buddha from Sahri Bahlol (ht. 8 ft 8 inch.) is in excellent state of preservation and of exceptional workmanship, ranking among the best of Buddha images in Gandhara. [Fig. 194]. It was originally covered with gold, and its radiance, great size and benign appearance, must have produced a deep impression on the minds of the worshippers. The depression in the forehead marked the *Ūrṇā* that was once set with a precious stone. The fingers of the hand show traces of webbing (*Jālāṅguli*). The curls of the hair are straight and parellel surmounted by a bump of wisdom and the very heavy folds. The larger halo indicates the period when the artists of Gandhara took their inspiration from the Mathura School in the Kushāṇa age producing such colossal images as the Sarnath and Maholi Bodhisattvas.

With the life-story of Buddha and also the legendary Jātakas taken from the art of eastern India, the Gandhara sculptors show a wide acquaintance with Iranian and Graeco-Roman motifs. The Gandhara art was naturally a blend of Indian,

Iranian and Graeco-Roman art elements. Among the Iranian motifs found may be mentioned the Fire Temple at Jandiyal, Goddess Nānī or Anāhitā with star-fangled crown, stepped merlon (i.e. battlement), winged lion, capitals with addorsed bull and lions with or without wings and fantastic animals with human heads. The Græco-Roman motifs are more common, such as Corinthian, Ionic and Doric pillars, cupids, garland-festoons, atlantes, tritons, marine deities, Demeter-Hārītī holding cornucopia (*Ṛiddhi-śṛiṅga*), Amohini-Yakshas (corresponding to Indian *Mālādhārī Devas*), Athena-Roma, Harpocrates, the Centaur, Silenus, Satyr, Garuḍa and Ganymede. [Fig. 195]. The Gandhara artists have scored their best success in depicting the statues of Pañchika and Hārītī either single or in pairs. [Figs. 196-7]. Pañchika was the Gandharan counterpart of Kubera and was lord of the Yakshas, a benignant deity ensuring divine power and riches. He is richly ornamented and seated in European fashion like a emperor holding a long spear. Hārītī, in this school, is the presiding Goddess of Fertility and children, depicted with the more tender feelings on her face with children on her breast and shoulder. She became the type of the veritable mother goddess in Gandhara. Sometimes she is depicted as four-armed holding a long trident and water-pot in her left hand a true counterpart of the Indian Goddess Pārvatī. Hārītī was the Buddhist form of the Brāhmanical Goddess Jātahāriṇī as elaborated in the Revatīkalpa. Her cult was also quite popular in Mathura art. Pañchika was the same as the Yaksha king Pañchālika, an incarnation of Vaiśravaṇa, whose worship was common between the Himalayas and Vindhyāchala. In Gandhara Buddhism the Pañchika-Hārītī pair fulfilled all the aspirations of the house-holders for prosperity and fertility. Their worship became a wide-spread cult not only throughout Gandhara but up to Central Asia. As a tutelary couple Pañchika was sometimes shown with a purse and Hārītī with the horn of plenty held in left hand.

The Gandhāra artists also tried the Woman-and-Tree motif showing a female figure standing under a tree in Śālabhañjikā pose. [Fig. 198]. But both the figures are extremely weak and the experiment remained without any success. On the other hand freizes with garlands on the shoulders of nude Yaksha figures, Erotes of Classical mythology, are bold and freely carved. The Atlas figures are also successfully treated. The one from Sikri (Lahore Mus. No. 218) is the most impressive. [Fig. 199]. The winged ichthyo-centaur (*kinnara machchha*) and the female hippocamp or human bust joined to the lower portion of a horse are depicted to fill tringular spaces in an ingenious manner. Similarly the marine bull (*go-machchha*), winged dragon (*aśva-machchha*) and tritons (*mahorāga*) seem to be counterparts of similar Mathura motifs. When the artists were called upon to handle purely classical themes they were in their best form, e.g. in the statue of Athena or Roma (Lahore Museum) holding a spear and wearing a helmet on the head and chiton on the body

depicted as a true divine patroness of the city showing vigour and benignity combined with strength and grace associated with the cult of city-goddesses. [Fig. 200]. A similar deity wearing a helmet and holding a spear inscribed as Roma is found on a coin of Huvishka. [Fig. 201].

I would consider it as one of the best creation of Gandhāran art, its charming beauty, pose and drapery, all testifying to unique æsthetic perfection. A statuette with a scabbard secured to a loose belt on the left side shows the ancient Scythian goddess Nanāiā probably of 2nd cent. A. D. A large number of stone dishes, probably used for toilet or as cosmetic trays and generally made of blue schist or steatite or soap-stone have been found as a side branch of Gandhāra art depicting such scenes as Apollo and Daphni (Ingholt, figs. 479), Dioscuri showing Castor and Pollax the two Aśvin deities of classical mythology (ibid., figs. 480), amorous couple (ibid., 483), woman riding on sea-monster (ibid., 484), couple with wine-cups and drinking scenes (ibid., 485-486), etc.

The art of Gandhāra in stucco showing mainly male and female heads and Bodhisattva images is of striking beauty which has drawn praise from art historians as being admirable creation of true masters. They equal some of the most worthy products of Gupta art. This was a new school which was at its height during the 4-5th cent. It transmitted its legacy to the Gandhāra art in terracotta of which the influences spread to the creations of Buddha and other figures on the Stūpa of Mir-purkhas in Sind and of the beautiful terracotta heads from the ancient site of Shaḍashadvana (Mod. Harvan) in Kashmir (which are now preserved in the Karachi Museum and at the National Museum, New Delhi). Marshall opined that the premier school of Gandhāra in stone sculpture declined in the 4th cent. A.D. and a new school of clay modeller came into existence in the 5th and 6th cent. producing works of the highest merit.

A special class of objects are the metallic trays in gold and silver found at all places in Gandhāra up to Central Asia and showing drinking and erotic scenes associated with the cult of Bacchus and drinking revelries of the Madraka-Yavanas in the spirit of utmost abundance. Stylistically they show Indian, Hellenistic and Sassanian features.

There are other noteworthy metallic figures of true Hellenistic inspiration, e.g. Harpocrates, the genius of silence and the silver repousse and Mask of Dionysos.

(1) The art of Gandhāra by virtue of its prolonged creativity, wide extension, prolific nature, originality of themes, eclectic approach and sympathetic understanding, is one of the great creations of World Art and should be rightly assessed as such in the history of the æsthetic endevour on the soil of Asia.

(2) In its creations we find a mingling of Greek, Iranian and Indian art idioms in which Hellenistic traditions pre-dominated. (3) Its soul was Buddhism.

(4) There are conscious efforts to borrow motifs and subjects from the art of Mathura aud central India, but in an inferior style ; e. g., Śālabhañjikā, atlantes and pillars of Indian type are depicted in a debased form. (5) But Hellenistic motifs and subjects, on the other hand, are extremely well done having exceptional art value. (6) Selected Buddhist subjects have been rendered with high artistic effect, e. g. Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas, with beautiful ornamentation, Kubera and Hāritī. It should, however, be admitted that the Buddha figure is stiff, insipid and lacking vital inspiration in comparison to the great Mathura figures. We do not find in Gandhara any thing of the vigour and introvert expression of the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures of the Mathura school.

CHAPTER XII

STŪPAS IN THE ĀNDHRA-SĀTAVĀHANA PERIOD

One of the boldest experiments in the field of architecture and sculpture in relation to a Buddhist Stūpa was carried out in Āndhradeśa during the period of 2nd cent. B. C.—3rd cent. A. D. It reflects in the fullest measure the glory and power of the Āndhra-Sātavāhana emperors (200 B.C.-225 A.D.) and their successors the Ikshvākus (c. 230 A.D. to 275 A.D.) and of the generous opulence and religious devotion of the sturdy merchant community that flourished on both inland and oceanic trade.

In the creation of the Andhra monuments the geographical factor was quite a compelling one. The Vengi country stretching between the deltas of Krishṇā and Godāvarī commanded towards its front face the entire Indian ocean (*Mahodadhi*) and towards its back was master of the five important trade routes which spread like the fanning fingers of the hand. Along these routes the most important Buddhist monuments were sited as Dubreuil has shown ; e.g. (i) on the road to Kaliṅga were amongst others Pīṭhāpuram and Saṅkārāma ; (ii) on the road to the south or Draviḍa country were Ghaṇṭaśāla and Bhaṭṭiprolu ; (iii) on the road to the Karṇāṭaka country were Amarāvatī, Golī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa ; (iv) on the road to Mahārāshṭra were Allūru and Jaggagyyapeṭa and ; (v) on the road to southern Kosala was the site of Guṇṭapalle, which was the oldest of the entire group of about thirty monuments. Thus from all sides the wealth of a thriving commerce poured into the coffers of Vengi merchants whose munificence took a visible from in the cluster of the Buddhist Stūpas found along these routes.

The earliest inspiration to the art movement that took shape in the Andhra country probably goes back to Aśoka. He was a strange emperor, who unrolled the map of Asia before him and plotted his creative activity in all the four direction in his own kingdom and beyond it up to Afghanistan and the Mediterranean towords the west and Nepal and Burma etc. towards the east. He was in direct touch with the country of Kaliṅga where the impact of his art activity was felt. A little to the south at Guṇṭapalle we find the cave-architecture of the Lomas Ṛishi and other caves of the Barābara group taking its footholds in an emphatic manner. It seems that the earliest Sātavāhana rulers (c. 200 B.C.) were kindly disposed to the Buddhist community of monks who were encouraged to fan out deeper into their territory. Amaravati or ancient Dhānyakaṭaka was the first capital of the Andhras where the earliest structural monuments were built in the Kṛishṇā Valley about 200 B. C. and

continued to be followed by the most stupendous Stūpas under the Later Sātavāhanas up to about 225 A.D. In the Western Ghats the Sātavāhanas wrested power from the Śakas and a political game of hide and seek with fluctuating fortune ensued between the two. But in Andhra the Sātavāhanas were undisputed masters for four centuries until they were succeded by the Ikshvāku kings in the middle of the third century A. D., who were builders of great monuments such as the Stūpas of Nagarjunikonda.

There are sure signs of the penetration of Buddhism in Āndhradeśa in the 2nd cent. B.C. Later on as the epigraphs tell us several active schools in Buddhism grew up which inspired the building of monumental Stūpas, e. g. (i) Chaityakas at Amaravati ; (ii) Pūrvaśailas at Nagarjunikonda, and Alluru ; (iii) Avaraśailas at Nagarjunikonda, Peḍḍavegī, Kaṇṭakaśaila (*Ghaṇṭaśāla*) ; and also two more schools, namely, (iv) Rajagiriyas ; and (v) Siddhāthikas.

The great art movement released by Aśoka's creative powers reached the Andhra country along the Kaliṅga and South Kosala routes leading to the foundation of a number of Buddhist monuments at Saṅkārāma situated on the Kaliṅga route and at Guṇṭapalle on the Kosala route. Probably the influences coming to Guṇṭapalle preceded those towards Saṅkārāma, since the Magadha route through the Sone and Jyotīrathā valleys was open much before the Kaliṅga war. The main architectural style at both places is rock-cut. The activity at Guṇṭapalle seems to have started about the middle of the 3rd cent. B. C. and at Saṅkārāma at about 200 B. C. The monuments at Guṇṭapalle are much better preserved and show a vigorous movement which brought into existence a local group of two rock cut Vihāras, one circular rock-cut chaitya-hall and several monolithic Stūpas in the beginning. An apsidal chaitya-hall of the Hīnayāna phase was built about 200 B. C. and finally in the 2nd cent. A. D. an apsidal chaitya-hall but with images of the Buddha in place of the Stūpa was built by the Māhāyānists.

Of the two Vihāras the larger one is mostly ruined, but the smaller one consists of a number of cells scooped in the rock. The façade of the Vihāra has been recessed in the rock in order to provide a projecting shelter over it. The overhanging rock forms a portico (*Mukhamaṇḍapa*) to protect the cave-residence from sun and rain. The façade consisted of three doorways, each flanked by a window on either side. Each of the doorways led into a long hall, each of different size. The three walls of each hall were pierced by openings leading into cells and somewhat bigger rooms at the end which are not quite regularly placed. This type of Vihāra excavation shows the architecture in its rudimentary stage showing an absence of an overriding plan implying a unity of architectural activity, the chambers being hollowed out at will. In the façade the portion above the doorways and the windows is occupied by a series of

horse-shoe arches terminating in a finial above and the spaces inside being filled by a blind chaitya-window with radiating spokes which are early attempts to imitate the wooden originals in rock-excavations. The style of every thing, viz. the cells, doorway openings, and arched arcading, is extremely simple and must have preceded the time when the earliest of the western Indian caves as at Bhājā came into existence.

ROCK-CUT CHAITYA :—Architecturally this is the principal monument at Guṇṭapalle. It is rock-cut and the earliest in date. It is deeply impressive by its style being much similar to the rock cut Chaitya-chamber of the Lomas Rishi and Sudāmā caves in Magadha and of Junnar and Koṇḍiwte in Saurāshṭra. It is circular in form with a monolithic Stūpa or Chaitya in the centre, surrounded by a narrow circum-ambulatory passage and covered by a circular roof with ribs under it, exactly copied from wooden originals. The shrine faces east and and has a diameter of 18′ and is 14¾′ high from the floor to the roof. The monolithic sacred Chaitya is almost half in size of the interior round apse leaving a narrow passage 3′ wide for going round. This implies an economising effort towards sculpting the rock. The measurements of the drum are, ht. 3′9″ and diameter 11′8″, the dome ht. 4′9″ and diameter 9′2″, thus giving a total eight of 8½′ only. There was a *harmikā* on the top. The circular ceiling of the dome is like an umbrella and melon-shaped of later times (Hindi *kharabu-jiyā*, Skt. *chhatrākāra*), having sixteen ribs distinctly cut in the rock and meeting at a focal point in the centre. They are bonded with each other by stone-cut rafters in a horizontal position, thus showing how truly the stone masons were copying the wooden originals. [Fig. 202]. It has been conceived as a complete replica of a thatched *Parṇaśālā* moulding the space around it.

There is a arched opening with a circular top on the eastern side of the circular chamber (*Parimaṇḍala chaitya*) which is framed by an outer façade through which a portion of the Chaitya is visible. This is similar in style to the façade of the Lomas Ṛishi cave and has in its upper portion a chaitya window with a plain blind screen, horse-shoe shape and also the ends of the longitudinal joists with a central finial on the top. Thus we are face to face at Guṇṭapalle with the earliest form of a rock-cut Buddhist Chaitya cave having a distinctive architectural character. Later on when this circular portion was joined to a *maṇḍapa* in front flanked by side aisles the excavators arrived at the complete architectural form of both the rock-cut and structural Chaitya halls. In the field of rock-excavations there was no further development in the Kṛishṇā Valley, but the spark touched the sculptures of Western India, specially in Mahārāshṭra, probably due to Sātavāhana inspiration. The structural type, however, was followed up in many other monuments of the Andhra country.

At Guṇṭapalle a structural apsidal chaitya hall with a circular apse has been

exposed in excavations which was put up about the middle of 2nd cent. A. D. as part of the Mahāyāna building activity. It is 53½′ long and 14½′ broad, with side walls about 4½′ thick, raised on broad foundations. Its circular portion had provision for installation of Buddha images along the wall and some sacred object of worship in the centre which has not been found. This chaitya hall, one of the largest in size, had a vaulted roof with earthen ware finials (*stūpikā*) and with richly ornamented façade with Buddha images.

Another noteworthy monument at Guṇṭapalle is a Stūpa with a casing of stone blocks (*aśma-śilā*), joined without mortar as at Sanchi. It is a hemispherical dome of 16′ in diameter, 8½′ high, resting on a cylindrical drum, 11½′ in diameter and 5′ high. The *harmikā* and the umbrella on top are missing. The stone blocks of casing (*śilā-kañchuka*) are neatly cut and accurately fitted in courses of regular stone masonry with slight curvature on their exterior side in order to bring out the round form of the Stūpa.

At Saṅkārāma (Skt. *Saṅghārāma*) in Viśākhāpaṭanam on Kaliṅga route, there is an important group of monuments datable to several periods. The earliest were wrought under the shadows of Aśokan monuments of the Barābar hills and comprised a large Buddhist Vihāra, the monolithic Stūpas, some of the cells and the three apsidal Chaitya halls dating from the 2nd cent. B. C. The monolithic Stūpas here are of very large size, the principal one front of the monastery being 65′ in diameter at the base. The second phase followed in the form of Stūpas covered with cut-stone-blocks and the third one in the form of structural brick Stūpas put up about the 2nd cent. A. D., although the building activity at the site continued up to the Pallava period.

Another early Buddhist Stūpa was found at Golī in Palnad Taluk of Guntur District situated on the river Kollaru, a tributory of the Kṛishnā about 18 miles below Nagarjunikonda. Some remarkable sculptures in white marble-like stone have been found at this site, of superior workmanship matched to the best art of Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda. Their carving is extremely well-done and they show the highest excellence achieved in the art of the Kṛishṇā Valley. There is a *Stūpapaṭṭa* amongst them (5′ 1½″ × 3′ 1″) on which a Stūpa raised on three receding terraces and covered with a lower frieze of rectangular slabs surmounted by five *āyaka-khambhas* on each face, is depicted with a drum and a high dome and having a *harmikā* on the top which is flanked by five tiered parasols (*chhatrāvalī*) on either side. [Fig. 203]. This appears to be a copy of the marble Stūpa at this site which was probably put up in the 2nd cent. A. D. with all the paraphernalia associated with such Andhra Stūpas. Amongst other subjects on the reliefs and friezes are a conspicuous Nāgarāja whose bold divine appearance is self-evident, Buddha and Bodhisattva images and several Jātakas, e. g. Vessantara Jātaka, Chhaddanta Jātaka, Sasa Jātaka, Mātiposaka

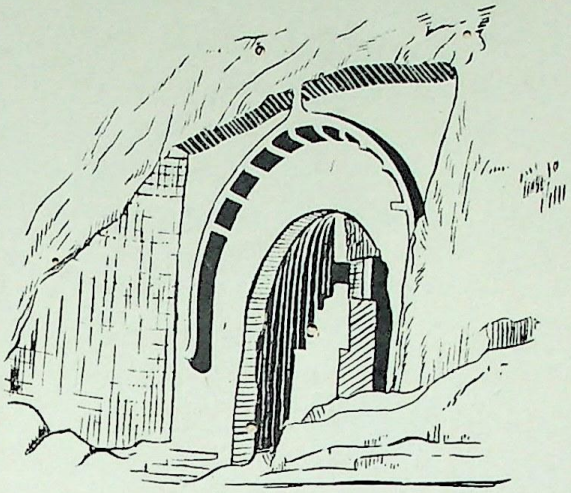


Fig. 202

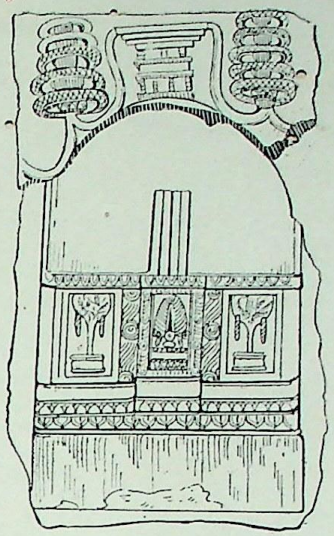


Fig. 203

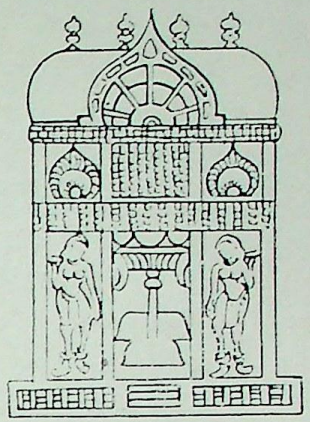


Fig. 204 a

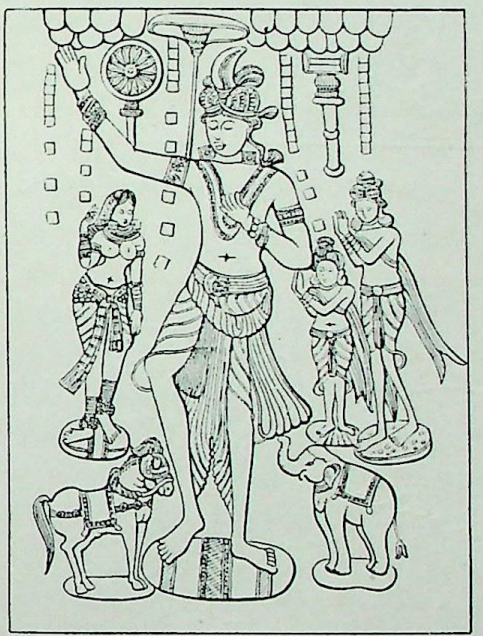


Fig. 204 b

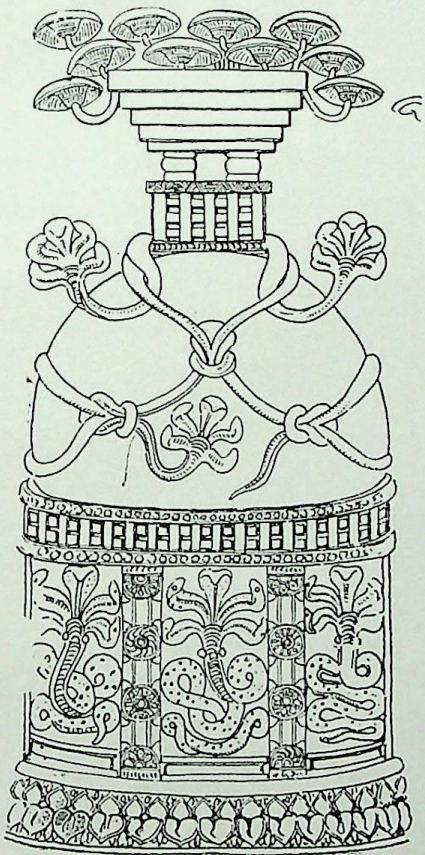


Fig. 208

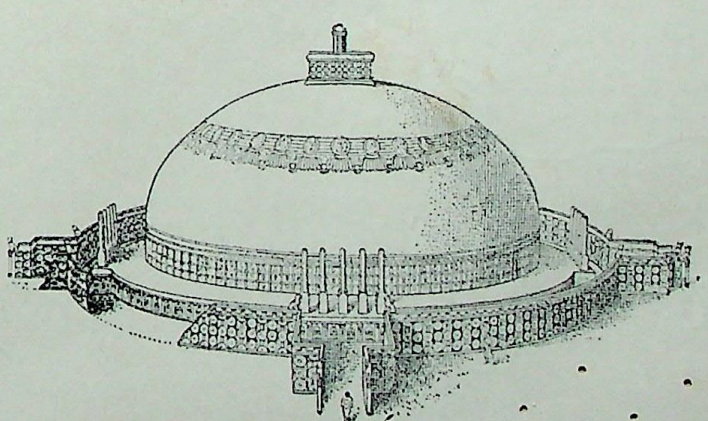


Fig. 205

PLATE LX

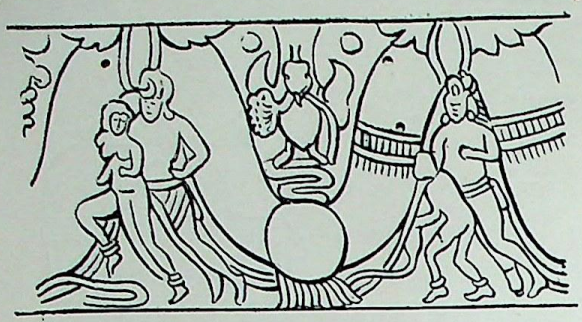


Fig. 206

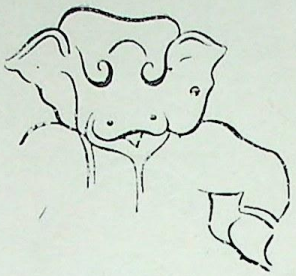


Fig. 210

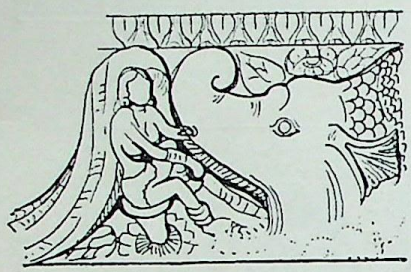


Fig. 207

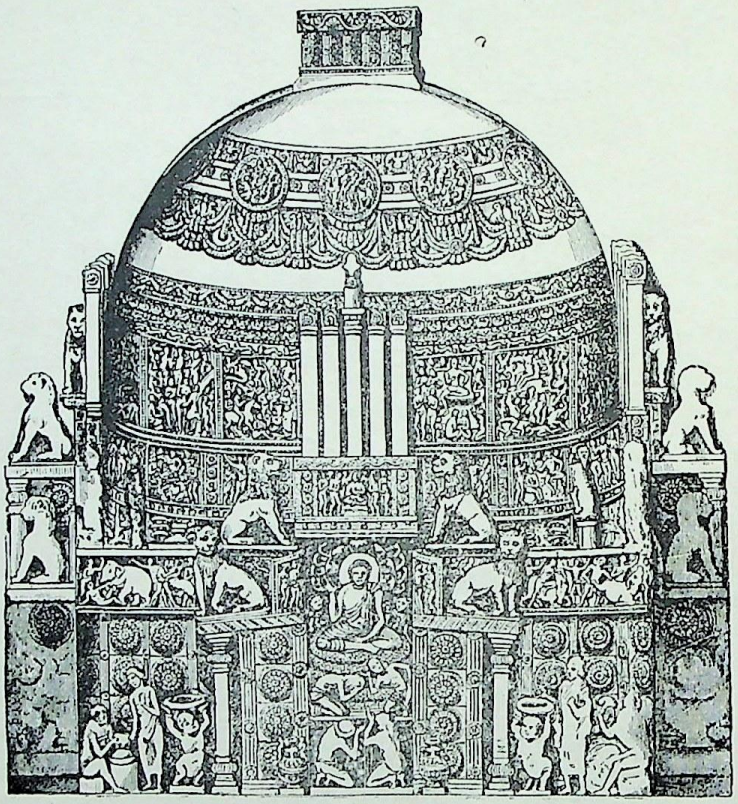


Fig. 209

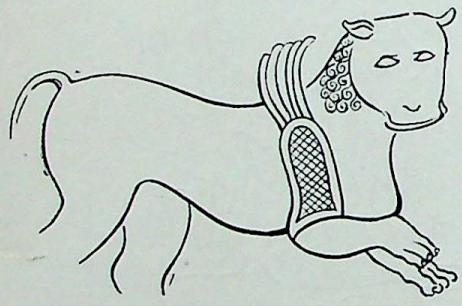
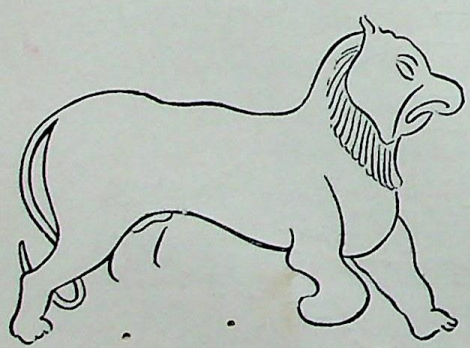


Fig. 211 a



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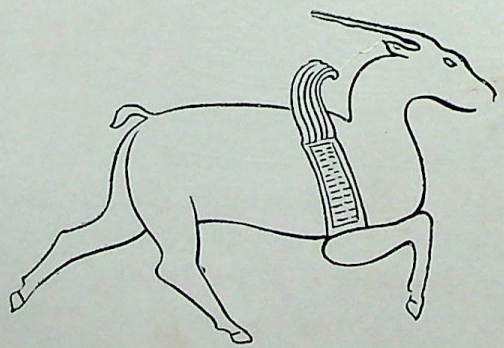


c

Fig. 211

Jātaka and several life-scenes of the Buddha as the temptation scene, Sujātā feeding the Buddha, First Sermon, Buddha's visit to Yaśodharā, subjugation of Nālāgiri. The detailed representation of the Vessantara Jātaka on two friezes in several panels recalls the reference to it in the description of a *Mahā-chetiya* in the Mahāvaṁsa. The date assigned to these sculptures on grounds of their style is 2nd-3rd. cent. A. D.

The Stūpa of Bhaṭṭiprolu situated on the route to the Tamila Land was a huge structure measuring 132′ in height and 148′ in diameter at the base, built of large-sized bricks in about the 3rd-2nd cent. B. C. In shape it was a low hemispherical mound similar to that at Sanchi. An inscribed relic-casket and some sculptures were found from this Stūpa which offers close parallels with the architecture of the Great Stūpa at Amaravati. With the relic-casket were found pearls, precious stones, gold flowers, beads, *triśūlas* and twenty-four small coins with the *triśūlas* and the sacred *pāda* encircled by a Nāga engraved on them. Strangely enough no Vihāra attached to the Stūpas of Bhaṭṭiprolu has been traced but the available inscriptions indicate that the local Buddhist Saṅgha was organised in to different committees for efficient functioning.

The great Stūpa at Ghaṇṭaśāla (ancient Kaṇṭakaśaila) was on the same southern path that of Bhaṭṭiprolu and possessed the same architectural features being 122′ in diameter at the base and 111′ wall above it. A central 10′ square solid brich work forms the core rising to the top of the Stūpa. This was encased by a bigger structure 22′ square. Between these two squares were radiating walls forming hollow spaces filled with mud and mortar. This outer square was enclosed by a circular wall of 56′ diameter externally and its inner side is touched by the extended walls of the square. Beyond this circle and concentric with it at a distance of $11\frac{1}{2}'$ is another wall of massive construction, the intervening space between the two peripheral circles being filled with subsidiary cross-walls forming cells that were filled with waste material. This resulted in great economy in building material while retaining strength of the whole structure. The inner circle formed the basis of the dome and the outer circle the basis of the first ground terrace (*Medhi*) used as the round path-way. In this planned architecture of the Stūpa comprising the two outer circles and two inner squares there were thirty-two compartmental cells in all, viz. 16 between the outer circles, 12 framing the outer square and 4 outside the solid brick square-core, all being filled with rammed mud conferring a massive solidity on the stupendous structure of the whole Stūpa. Thus it was a controlled architectural effort from beginning to end, the builders exercising their minds with respect to the details of construction, principle of durable building and economy of material. It has been found that a similar plan of architecture

was adopted in the big Stūpa at Peddaganjam indicating that such architectural planning had taken the form of a movement. Fragments of carved marbles have been found at Ghaṇṭaśāla showing that at one time there were as good sculptures at this place as in any other Andhra Stūpa.

On the route from Vengi to Maharashtra was sited 30 miles north-west of Amaravati the great Stūpa of Jaggayyapeṭa on the bank of the Palleru stream. The group consisted a number of Stūpas, monasteries and a *Maṇḍapa* supported on pillars, which probably formed part of a Chaitya-hall. They were built of bricks and grey-chaste marble, which gave scope for carving of the highest quality. The building activity at Jaggayyapeṭa continued for about seven centuries as shown by its inscriptions ranging in date from the 2nd cent. B.C. to the 3rd cent. A.D. in the time of the Ikshvākus and then to the 5th cent. A. D. in the time of the Pallavas. The biggest Stūpa at Jaggayyapeṭa was an imposing one being of the form of a mammoth hemi-spherical bubble, 31½ ft. in diameter, the processional path 10½ ft. wide and surrounding slabs 3′ 9″ above the floor. There was a marble railing round the Stūpa enclosing the *pradakshiṇāpatha* formed of carved slabs similar to the big railing at Amaravati. The exterior of the Stūpa was covered in its lower portion by carved marble slabs of great beauty and on the dome above by a brick-casing which was plastered in lime and probably painted when complete in its original form. It must have been provided on its flat top with a *harmikā* and in its middle portion with the usual cardinal projections furnished with the five *Āryaka* pillars and side staircases together with an intermediate processional path surrounded by a balustrade. The inside of the Stūpa was planned in a rather more original manner and consisted of courses of rammed mud two ft. thick alternating with layers of large-sized bricks, so that the two kinds of *kachchā* and *pakkā* floors vertically placed one above the other bonded together into a compact mass that served as the solid core of the Stūpa, the whole being secured by an outer covering of bricks. What distinguishes the Stūpa at Jaggayyapeṭa is the quality, size and number of its sculptured slabs. There were no carvings on the slabs at the base but the pilasters above them were carved in the style of early Amarāvatī. They were not in such high relief as in the later phase of Amaravati but were of larger size. The headdresses of the figures are conspicuous and the ear-rings are ponderous like those at early Ajanta. The style shows restful poses and the carving is restrained than that at Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda. Although the number of available sculptures is limited, there is a great variety in the scenes and a rich documentation of contemporary life. A marble slab of this Stūpa (now in the Madras Museum) shows a *puṇya-śālā* supported on four pillars in front and reached by two side stairways. Inside it is a *pādukā-paṭṭa* under an umbrella with two hanging streamers. The object of worship is flanked by two female figures, one of them

holding a *pūrṇaghaṭa* with flowers on its mouth (*pushpa-pidhāna*). It was a two-storeyed building like those shown in relief at Bharhut, and Sanchi with a vaulted roof furnished with chaitya-windows on the sides and in front and having on the top four stūpī finials. Amongst the Stūpas of the Kṛishṇā Valley the one at Jaggayyapeṭa was a distinct contribution both for its architecture and sculpture.

Amarāvatī Stūpa

The facts relating to the discovery of the Amaravati Stūpa are so interesting that it is worthwhile stating them here. When complete in its full glory in the second-third century A. D. it was worthy of the honour of being reckoned as a monument of world art. But it has been mauled beyond description and not a vestige remains on the site. And, its former splendour has to be imagined with tearful eyes by sympathetic art connoisseur on the basis of the surviving sculptured marbles in the museums at Madras, Calcutta and London.

Amaravati is comparatively a very modern small town named after the shrine of Amareśvara Śiva. It is situated in Guntur district eighteen miles from Bazwada on the right or south bank of Krishṇa, sixty miles above its mouth. Just south of the town stood the Great Stūpa, but about half a mile west of the town are the ruins of Dharaṇikoṭa with its earthern embankments which was really once the capital of the Satavahanas under the name of Dhānyakaṭaka.

The discovery of the monument including the disposal of its sculptures is a thrilling chapter. Colonel Mackenzie first saw it in 1797 while on a tour of duty. Several years before him a local Raja had opened the Stūpa and removed a large number of marbles to build his shrine, town and palace. Many of the antiquities perished in the process but what remained *in situ* attracted the attention of Mackenzie who communicated an account of them to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He returned to the spot in 1816 as Surveyor-General of Madras and employed all the means at his disposal during the two following years for a minute study of the monuments and the remaining sculptures. The results of his labours are careful plans of the buildings and maps of the surrounding country, together with eighty very carefully finished drawings of the sculptures, 'which are unsurpassed', in words of Fergusson, 'for accuracy and beauty of finish by any drawings of their class that were ever executed in India.' Three sets were prepared and of which one is still preserved in the Library of the Commonwealth Relations Office. At the same time Mackenzie sent some specimens to the three museums named above, where they have remained their principal ornaments to this day. But little notice was taken of them until Walter Elliot, Commissioner of Guntur, in 1840, excavated a portion of the monument which had not before been touched, and sent to Madras the marbles that were

then found. They lay there under sun and rain for eighteen years until 1856 they were dispatched to London where also they were consined to a godown till accidentally Fergusson came to know about them and after proper treatment placed them in the British Museum where they are displayed on the main staircase.

But the teasures of Dhānyakaṭaka still remained unexhausted. In 1830 Mr. Robertson removed some thirty-three Amaravati sculptures which eventually reached Madras and from there were sent to London in 1855. In 1876 Sewell had some hap-hazard digging done by ignorant workmen exposing a good number of sculptures. In 1879-80 the Duke of Buckingham, Governor of Madras, ordered a full clearance of the site leading to the complete destruction of the Stūpa. In 1881 Burgess came on the scene and found some 300 sculptured specimens and fragments to which he added 90 more pieces by his own excavations. The bulk (361 pieces) of these found their way to the Madras Museum in three lots, 170 pieces in 1883, 11 in 1891, and 128 and 52 in 1891. In 1905-06 and 1908-09 excavations Alexander Rea recovered additional valuable sculptures which came to be deposited in the Madras Museum.

From the above account the fate of the Amaravati Stūpa reads like a plunder of the Heavenly Palace of Indra in which the only silver lining is that such a substantial portion of the carved marbles has been rescued which enables to reconstruct a mental picture of the physical and spiritual splendour of this Great Stūpa, or pile of sculptured marbles.

Inscriptions

The slabs of the Amarāvatī Stūpa bore short donative epigraphs like those at Bharhut and Sanchi. Hundred twenty-six have been listed by Sivaramamurti. They reveal several interesting facts. The Stūpa was known as *Mahāchetiya*. It was inspired by the special sect of Buddhist monks named *Chaityakas*. The Mahāchetiya Stūpa was built at Dhānyakaṭaka, referred to several times as Dhanakaḍaka, Dhānyaghaṭaka, which made the Stūpa famous as Dhanamahāchetiya or Kaṭamahāchetiya. In its building cooperative effort played an important part. Donors from Pāṭaliputra, Rājagiri, Tamila (Damila) country, Ghaṁṭasāla (*Ka(ṅ)ṭakaselaka*), Vijayapura (Bezwada), etc. were attracted in making gifts to the Stūpa besides hundreds of local householders (*gahapati*), lay-worshippers (*upāsaka*), merchants (*vāṇīya*), caravan traders (*sārtha*), jewellers or bankers (*heraṇika*), and royal officers as *paṇiya-gharika* and *rājalekhaka*. The local merchant-guild referred to as *Dhānyakaṭaka Nigama* was most active with its contributions to the building of the Stūpa. Its members were known as *naigama* and the president of the honourable guild is stated to have made a rich gift (*bhadranigamasa seṭhipamukhasa*). The epigraphs throw welcome light on the organi-

sation of the *nigama* institution of which the individual members were known as *śreshṭhin* and the foremost of them as *śreshṭhipamukha*, i.e. mahāśreshṭhin. A special class of the merchant-community that had adopted Buddhism was known as the *gahapati*. The lay men invoked the religious merit of their gifts in favour of their parents, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, wives, and other family relations (*ñātibandhubāndhava*), a formula found also at Bharhut, Sanchi and Mathura. The gift was made for the welfare of all sentient beings (*savasa cha lokasa hitasukhathataya*).

The local Buddhist church was also well-organised. Under the appellation of the Chaityakas (*mahāchetiye chetikeyānam*), who were comprised of a religious hierarchy of bhikshus, bhikshunis, pavajikā, theras, mahātheras, mahādhammakathika, vinayadhara, uvajjhāyā-uvajjhayini, antevāsika-antevasikini, that maintained a brisk religious atmosphere and prompted the laity to make religious donations to the *Bhagavato Mahāchetiya*.

The nature of the architectural elements is also revealed in the epigraphs. For example, there was a high ground railing (*mahāvedikā*) furnished with copings (*unisa, unhisa*) and cross-bars carved with medallions (*parichakā suchi*), both being referred to several times. It had four entrances, the south one being mentioned as *dakshiṇa pārśvadvāra*. Facing each gatway was the conspicuous projection called *āyāka*, of which the one on the north (*uttarāyāka*) and the other on the south (*dakshiṇāyāka*) have been actually found on the slabs. As we know from other Stūpas each of these *āyaka* platforms had five pillars, called *āyakakhambha* (*dakshināyāke chaityakhambha*). The outer marble casing was the most outstanding element in the construction of the *mahāchetiya* referred to in numerous inscriptions as *udhaṁpaṭa* (=ūrdhvapaṭa) or simply *paṭa*. But these slabs had specific names after the motifs and figures sculptured on them, e. g. the slab carved with a full vase (*pūrṇaghaṭakapaṭa* or *kalasa-paṭa*), figure of *svastika* (*sothika-paṭa*), figure of wheel (*chakapaṭa*), figure of Buddha (*Budhapaṭa*). The big lotus garland carved round the dome was a beautiful motif referred to here as *abdamala* or *abātamālā* (=abjamālā), same as *kiñjalkinī* of later literature, offered to objects of divine worship. On the top was the usual umbrella (*chediyas chhata*). The monolithic slabs inserted between the two upright posts of the terraced balustrade were probably known as *peṇḍaka*, a word of which the meaning is not quite certain. There is a reference to a lamp-post (*divastambha*) and a central pavilion (*padhāna-maṇḍapa*), which seems to have formed part of an apsidal shrine.

The work was executed by stone-cutters (*pasanika=pāshāṇika*) under the direction of superintendents of works (*navakarmika*), whose chief was known as *Mahānavakarmika*.

The records also throw light on the history of the *mahāchetiya*. Two of the earliest ones being in the Maurya-Śuṅga script (c. 200 B. C.), mention Dhanakaṭaka, the ancient name of Amaravati; and the subsequent ones refer to the Sātavāhana emperors Vasiṭhīputra Pulumāyi, Yadnya Siri Sadakani, and Siriśivamaka Sadasa. Some of them are in the script of the time of the Ikshvākus (3rd century A. D.) and one of them refers to the name Vākāṭaka (5th century A. D.). There is then a long gap until we find two records, dated 1182 and 1234 A.D., engraved on a pillar in the Amareśvara temple at Amaravati mentioning gifts 'to the lofty Stūpa of the Buddha, which is finely decorated with various sculptures' and for the acceptance of the Buddha 'who resides at Śrī-Dhānyakaṭaka'. This shows that the Stūpa was intact up to the thirteenth century.

Form of the Amarāvatī Stūpa

Some indication of the architectural form of the Stūpa must have become available to the student from the technical terms as recorded in the inscriptions. But a complete picture of the Mahāchetiya as it stood in the days of its glory is to be studied here.

The first element to be encountered was the big ground railing, *mahāvedikā*, encircling the Stūpa. It consisted of massive coping-stones supported on the top of upright pillars, between each pair of which were three cross-bars inserted in mortices and the bottoms of which were fixed in foundations of brick.

The general plan and the decoration of the Stūpa can be ascertained with fair accuracy from the surviving remains, survey plans of the early archaeologists like Mackenzie, Sewell and Burgess, and from the depiction of the Great Stūpa on its *Stūpa-paṭas*. From this cumulative evidence we are able to know that the rail was the most richly ornamented of its class found anywhere else and fortunately has been preserved in a portion much larger than for any other constituent part of the Stūpa. Its diameter, as calculated, was 193′, almost twice of that at Bharhut, thus making a circular enclosure of about 600′, round the drum of the giant Stūpa. Each upright pillar was about 9′ high, 2′ 10″ wide; having between each pair three crossbars (*suchi, suji* = sūchi), about 2′ 9″ in the diameter of their medallions, because of which they are appropriately named as *parichakā sūchi* in the inscriptions. Their lenticular ends are fitted into the mortices (*sūchipuḍaṁtara*) of the pillars. The railing pillars were topped by heavy coping-stones (*ushṇīsha*, called *unisa-paṭa* in the inscriptions), 2′ 8″ high, 1′ wide, rounded at the top and secured to the pillars by the mortice-and-tenon device. At each cardinal point of the railing there was an opening, 26′ wide, for the gateway, although the arrangement of the superstructure of the three architraves with small balusters is missing here as in all the Andhra Stūpas. The quadrant of the

railing having reached its terminal pillar projects outwards at right-angles to a length of 16′ and then with the same re-entrant device as at Sanchi turns inside at right-angles to a length of six and a half feet, and then again turning outwards at right-angles to a length of eight feet. Thus the entire length of the coping crowning the four quadrants and also the re-entrants of the gateways, measured about 800′, and the grand rail itself consisted of 136 pillars and 348 cross-bars. [Fig. 205].

The coping as in the case of other Stūpas was made in pieces of different length, the largest being of 11′ feet. It was carved on both faces, the outer one with the beautiful motif of garland-bearing figures, a rendering of the *mālādhārī devas*. The undulating meanders of the garland were filled with figures of different religious objects like the sacred tree, Stūpa, Dharmachakra, etc. It may be noted that the enriching garland at Amaravati is very conspicuous in form and the transporting figures are perfectly human with no resemblance to the dwarfish Erotes or Yakshas. [Fig. 206]. This garland is present not only on the surviving fragments of copings but also may be seen on several of the *Stūpapaṭas* which illustrate the railing. There are also some fragments in which the thick garland is borne on the shoulders of dwarfs, or elephant-headed Yakshas, or issuing out at one end from the gaping mouth of a *makara* with a Yakshī seated in front of it. [Fig. 207]. Thus the ancient *repertoire* of decorative motifs was still retained to beautify the long garland. On the inner side of the coping were carved like ivory life-scenes of the Buddha and Jātakas; whole making up a series of pictures of Buddhism, unsurpassed by anything known to exist in Indian art. The pillars of the railing were most lavishedly decorated in an excellent style of which the artists were capable. Such display of perfect workmanship was seldom conceived in Stūpa art. The decoration consisted of a central medallion of full-blown lotus (*padmaka*) with two half medallions above and below (*ardhachandraka*). The interspaces are horizontally divided into three flutes, the upper ones filled with figures of *dampatīs* and folks flanking in adoration a central object of worship, e.g. Stūpa, Wheel, Tree, Footprints, etc., and the spaces below the central medallions are adorned with figures of dancing dwarfs, which appear to be a rendering of the *Sadāmattaka* Devas. The inner face of the pillars is similarly decorated with one full and two half medallions but the flutes of the interspaces and sometimes the half medallions also were carved with the Jātakas and life-scenes of Buddha in harmony with the carving of the coping. A different type of pillars smaller in size, and also copings and cross-bars matching with them, were found in the north-west quadrant. They are unsculptured on the outer face and probably were put up during some stage of restoration.

The cross-bars, three in number with each pair of pillars, were carved on both faces with full-blown lotuses (*phullaka*) excepting the inner face of the middle one

which showed some scene from Buddhist legend. The round medallions of the cross-bars are referred to as *parichakrā* in the inscriptions.

The gateways were the simple opening without the crossbeams or latticed superstructure as at Bharhut or Sanchi. Their double re-entrants were reconstructed on the basis of their brick foundations. The railing of the gateway was crowned by four lions, two facing each other at the point where the coping stopped and the railing took a turn, and two others at the terminal of the railing and looking outwards.

The ambulatory passage was about five feet higher than the terrace outside the rail, and so a small stairway with a moonstone (*chandraśilā*) at its bottom decorated with lotuses, as illustrated on one of the *Chaityapaṭas* of the late phase. On the same slab the vertical face of the terrace outside the railing is decorated with a row of animals, *chatushpadapaṅkti* of the *Mahāvaṁsa*.

At one time it was believed that there was an inner rail between the Stūpa and the grand balustrade on the ground level. But this was artistically an impossible position. The fact was that the pilasters and the slabs found placed against an encircling brick platform originally formed part of the decoration of the drum of the main Stūpa and of its terraced or intermediate balustrade.

A distinctive feature of the Andhra Stūpas was the construction of four projecting platforms from the body of the Stūpa facing the gateway openings. These were known as *āyāka* and two of them on the north and south sides are actually referred to in the inscriptions as *uttarāyāka* and *dakhināyāka* respectively. The word *āyāka* was derived from Skt. *āryaka*, meaning the worshipful and was already known at Mathura in the term *āyāgapaṭa*. According to Mackenzie's plan the platforms were 32′ long and 6′ wide, and were put up at a height of 20′ from the base of the drum as actually found at Nagarjunikonda *in situ* they measure 22′ by 5′. The architects introduced this innovation by deliberate choice. In the earlier phase they were absent but on the *Stūpapaṭas* of the later phase they form a conspicuous feature. [Figs. 208-9]. To accommodate them in proper perspective the super-structure of the gateway was eliminated so as not to interfere with the free view of the platforms. Each of these was provided with an elaborate structure of itself, viz. a frontal *āyāgapaṭa* carved with the figure of Buddha or a Nāgarāja, two side staircases leading to the upper processional path. On the top of each platform were five octagonal pillars (*aṭṭhaṁsika āyākakhambha*) about 10′ to 15′ in height. The *Stūpapaṭas* show them to be crowned with arched windows (but in Nagarjunikonda they are domed), the central one having invariably a miniature Stūpa on the top, and their bases display the decoration of Bodhivṛiksha, Dharmachakra, Stūpa, Dharmachakra, Bodhivṛiksha, or of five Stūpas, or of five Buddhas.

The *āyakas* divided the intermediate railing into four quadrants. A terrace 5′ wide projected from the drum encircled by a balustrade of which the pillars were 8′ high. Between each pair of pillars was inserted a monolithic rectangular slab in place of the cross-bars that was carved on both sides, which is probably mentioned as *peṇḍaka* in the inscriptions.

The Chaityapaṭas show that the Stūpa was encased by sculptured slabs to which the inscriptions refer as *Udhaṁpata* (=*ūrdhvapaṭa*). There was a series of such sculptured slabs. One frieze was fitted all round the drum; its height being about 10′, and scenes of Buddha's life and other kindred figures were carved on them. A special feature was a rail pattern carved below and above the scenes of a Chakravartī king with Seven Jewels (*Sapta-ratna*). At the level of the *āyaka* platforms there was another frieze of such large slabs on the vertical portion of the dome measuring about 11′, in height. These slabs may be identified as *Chakrapaṭa, Stūpapaṭa, Buddhapaṭa, Bodhipaṭa, Pūrṇaghṭapaṭa, Svastikapaṭa*, etc., some of the names being found in the inscriptions. Above this beautiful frieze was the spring of the curvature of the dome which was decorated by several small bands; the first being a row of animals (*chatuppadapaṅkti*), a row of *triratna* motifs, a row of full vases (*puṇṇaghaṭapaṅkti*).

On the shoulder of the dome, as Stūpapaṭas show, was a lotus garland (*abjamālā*=*abdmālā* of inscriptions), and above it a decorative band of round medallions filled with figures alternating with palm-trees.

On the top there was a *Harmikā* of fairly large size, being 24′ square. In the centre of the Divine Mansion was a thick stone post inserted deep in the body of the dome which supported the main umbrella and which stood inside a railing. On the two sides of the dome in its upper portion are figures of dancing *devas* (*nachchaka devā*) and worshipping *devas* (*mālādhārī devā*) and below them group of Yaksha musicians.

There are variations in this scheme of decoration as evolved to several centuries and demonstrated by carving on different *Chaitya-paṭas*. The Amaravati Stūpa was the loftiest monument in the whole of Andhradeśa, almost double in dimensions to the Bharhut and Bhaṭṭiprolu Stūpas. Its artistic splendour was unsurpassed and the architectural planning was the outcome of the boldest imagination. It stood as the perfect example of the monumental glory of the Sātavāhana age.

The internal structure of the Andhra Stūpas shows a certain degree of evolution. The small Stūpa at Goli and the larger Stūpas at Bhattiprolu and Gudivada were of solid brick masonry laid in compact floors from top to bottom. In the building of the Jaggayyapeṭa Stūpa there was some marked advance dictated by economy of material and labour. In that, brick-courses, two feet thick, were used

alternately with courses of rammed mud. At Ghaṇṭasāla we see better principles of scientific constructions, viz. a core of concentric brick-squares in the centre with interconnecting walls making compartments which were filled with mud and rubble and then radiating walls from the core to the circumference with similarly filled compartments between the two walls. In view of the wholesale demolision of the inner structure of the Amaravati Stūpa it is difficult to postulate its original form. But since the core of the main Stūpa and its peripheral structure were put up originally about 200 B. C. it appears that the Stūpa started with a solid masonry construction. It seems to have been a small *Alpeśākhya* Stūpa which was later on converted by the then prevailing techniques of enlargement into a *Maheśākhya* Stūpa of the biggest dimensions amongst all the Stūpas of Central and Western India and the Vengi country. This appears to have been the architectural process of extending radial walls from the pre-existing solid core and filling the compartments with rubble (*ishṭakāchūrṇa*) and fine clay (*slakṣhṇa mṛittikā*). The bricks found in these Stūpas are fairly big, being up to 24" in length, 18" in breadth and 4" in thickness, and it should be said to the credit of those brick-makers (*ishṭakāvardhaki*) that the high standard and quality of baking the bricks in the kiln were such as to preserve the bricks intact for about twenty centuries until the spoliation by human hands dislodged them from their places. The drum-base and the dome above, although rising up to a height of about 100′, did not sink, sag or burst but stood intact to meet the challenge of time.

As already mentioned (p. 125), Stūpas in the Andhra Valley had three distinctions, viz. chaste marble of butter-like yellowish whiteness (*medavaṇṇa pāsāṇa*), profusion of sculptured forms and decorative motifs (*sabbāni rūpakāni*), and the box-like projections on the four sides of the *Dhātugarbha*, known as *mañjūshā* or *āryaka*, from which evolved the Rathikās of the Brahmanical temples.

Sculptures

The number of surviving sculptures from the Mahāchetiya is probably the largest found anywhere else in Andhradeśa. These sculptures certainly show a great beaty of carving and variety and give evidence of the natural evolution of style over a period of five centuries. On the basis of style and epigraphic evidence these may be roughly divided into four periods as follows :

1. Early or Archaic Period. C. 200 B. C. Contemporaneous with the foundation of the Stūpa (of which period several inscriptions in Maurya-Śuṅga script have been found).

2. Intermediate Phase. C. 100 A. D. Contemporaneous to the period of the Sātavāhana Emperor Vāsishṭhīputra Pulumāvi (A. D. 16-119 ; whose inscription is found at Amaravati, Sivaramamurti, *ASMM*, No. 51).

3. Mature Phase. C. 150-200 A. D. Contemporaneous to the period of Siri Yajña Sātakarṇi (A. D. 160-189; whose inscription was found at Amaravati, Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 261).

4. Last Phase. 3rd century A. D. Contemporaneous to the period of the Ikshvāku kings. Inscriptions in the Ikshvāku skript of Nagarjunikanda being also found at Amaravati.

The evolution of the Amaravati Stūpa thus becomes a simple problem receiving chronological proof from the epigraphs themselves. Whenever there was architectural and sculptural activity in relation to the Mahāchetiya it has left behind its proof in the existing inscriptions and we are thus provided with a natural frame-work of time-scale in which the builders raised, restored, enlarged and retouched this stupendous monument.

In the early phase, the style of figures with their faces, dress and ornament has its nearest parallel at Bharhut and in Caves X and IX at Ajanta. Sculptures of this period are limited in number and fragmentary. The faces are frontally conceived with conspicuous turbans on the head and heavy earrings of the *prākāravapra* type with a spiral back and square front as explained earlier, and several necklaces with square clasps; and the eyes are slightly aslant. There is some degree of stiffness and dullness in expression. The arms and fingers are attached and bear ornaments of puppet-like formality. The girdle of the female figures is broad, secured by a big clasp in front. On the male figures the girdle is rope-like resembling the entrails of a boar (*śūkarāntraka*) type and generally female figures wear a sash (*kāyabandhana*). Double lines are engraved on the thighs and lower part of the cloth indicating fine folds. The feet are splayed opening wider on the front side adjoined at the heel.

There is no Buddha figure as at other centres, but his presence is always indicated by symbols. On the coping the heavy garland is carried on the shoulders of dwarfish Yakshas, as shown at Bharhut, Sanchi and in the Western Indian Chaitya-halls (cf. Sabhāparva, *ante*, p. 88). There are rows of elephant-headed pot-bellied Yakshas who formed the prototypes of Gaṇeśa figures of much later times. Some of the animal figures on the rail, especially winged griffins with eagle heads are very vigorous and recall the varied rich repertoire of early Indian art which was in vogue from India to Iran and Western Asia. The pillar with the vase-capital supporting addorsed elephants also bespeaks archaic traditions. The bell motif (*kiṅkiṇi-jāla*) of the early Stūpa copings also occurs here as a border motif. The *makara* appears with a gaping mouth oozing meandering creepers. [Figs. 210-13].

In the second phase there is a definite evolution of style marked by naturalness and freedom of expression, greater elegance and variety of poses. The material

consists of some casing slabs. The style of carving has its parallel in the early Kushāṇa art of Maṭhura (c. 1st century A. D.). The stock of motifs became richer with a general tendency to incorporate the scenes from social life. The worship of Buddha through symbols and human figures is seen side by side just as in early Mathura reliefs. This was the period of Vāsishṭhīputra Pulumāvi and the great Sātavāhana empire was in its full force and independent assertiveness. His authority and artistic activities extended from the eastern to the western ocean as we known from a Nasik cave-inscription in which some donation of Pulumāvi are recorded in favour of the Dhānyakaṭaka monks. The slabs depict a series of life-scenes of Buddha, showing the Master in a symbolical form but only a couple of times in human form. The elegant Buddha figures indicate to Mathura for their prototypes with a spiritual expression as on the face of the Katra Bodhisattva. Some of the scenes are—*Buddha's Abhinishkramaṇa* and *Māra-vijaya*. The women wear diaphanous drapery as at Mathura and appear to be nude although they are with vestment.

The third phase appertains to the mature stage at Amaravati when the building activity and the sculptural art reached their highest development. In the second half of the second century A. D. the glory of the Sātavāhana empire (*sāmrājyalakshmī*) enjoyed its highest wealth, beauty and fame of which the best fruits may still be seen in the large number of rail-pillars, copings, bars, *āyāka*-platforms and their pillars, terraced balustrade and the drum-slabs with intervening decorative friezes and the large number of *paṭṭas* like the *chakrapaṭṭa*, *stūpapaṭṭa*, *savastikapaṭṭa*, *Buddhapaṭṭa*, and the still numerous slabs carved with Buddha's life. The Mahāchetiya evolved as a *maheśākhya* Stūpa by several devices of enlargement invested with boldness of imagination and utmost depth of religious feeling and creative originality. The sculptures are marked by an unknown exhuberance and joy determined to fructify the kingdom of heaven (*Amarāvatī*) on earth.

The great ground rail, about 13′ high, was a work of this age and is said to have been inspired by the sage Nāgārjuna. The gorgeousness of decoration and perfection of carving in the medallions, fluted corners of the pillars, and on the copings and cross-bars, make the Amaravati Mahāvedikā an wonderous work of superb art throughout India. The *ūrdhvapaṭṭa* slabs are of the same quality showing the highest watermark of the manipulating skill of the Sātavāhana artists. Working on large slabs, 10 to 13 feet in length, they have displayed perfect mastery of composition dealing with a number of figures and scenes but all set in distinct registers and groups of principal and subsidiary, vertical and horizontal bands. The world of Devas and that of men and animals are integrated with a rare perfection and an atmosphere of endless joy is created in the visage of each *ūrdhvapaṭṭa*. Indeed, there is so much of

meaning for the mind to grasp and so much of beauty to admire that each Amaravati slab leaves a haunting impression ever afterwards. As observed by Sivaramamurti, the figures are conceived in several planes, both deep and shallow and in difficult poses with all kinds of flexions, buoyancy and facile movement. The delineation of figures in the hands of the Mahāchetiya-masters appears more like script than carving.

For the Buddha most-often repeated is the *Pādukāpaṭa* combined with a Pillar of Fire (*Agniskandha = Aggikhandha*) which was but another form of the Tower of Wisdom (*Prajñāskandha*) that the Buddha was. It was then a prevailing conception about his cosmic mind that a ray shooting from it enveloped the whole world and thus he became a *Lokottaramahāpurushaa* the Supramundane Great Being, visualised as the lofty brand of fire or the burning bush of light or a perfect incarnation of Sūrya, in which family he was born.

The main garland on the coping, transported by men and women of full stature and perfectly adorned with beautiful ornaments and drapery, belongs to this period. Their handsome forms agree with the ideal *Mālādhārī Devas* mentioned in the Divyāvadāna amongst the encircling *Rakshāpaṅkti*. The Amaravati carvings of the thousandfold garland and the human figures carrying it are a great advance on the dwarfish Yakshas of earlier periods, or Erotes of Gandhara sculpture and they show the complete Indianisation of the motif with a religions background and integration amongst the several classes of Devas invoked for the welfare of a being and the portection of a monument. The garland is sometimes shown being emitted from the mouth of a *makara*, a symbol of Varuṇa's ocean and also from the mouth of a stoutly built Yaksha, a servant of Vaiśravaṇa Kubera. The Bhāgavatas later on transformed it into a heavenly garland of one thousand lotuses offered to a deity.

The crowded composition of figures is visible in such scenes as the confusion created by an elephant in the streets of Rājagṛiha, or by the fierce aspect of king Udayana shooting with his bow at the frightened harem. In both of these the artists retains his mastery over the available surface of the bas-relief for distinctness and symmetry. [Figs. 214-15].

The mature Amaravati style of the second century A. D. with its great majesty of sculpture was followed by a comparative decline and stiff formalism in the 3rd century A. D. which was the same period as that of the Nagarjunikonda Stūpa. Quite a good number of drum slabs were either used as palmsests for carving fresh scenes or their backs were out-turned as faces and carved with new scenes of *chaityapaṭṭas* which were more conventional. The freedom of the artists was subordinated to a set pattern of decoration and conventionalism that did not give much scope for imagination. The figures are somewhat taller and slimmer, and loaded with

pearl-string decoration. The sacred-thread woven with small pearls (*muktāphala-yajñopavīta*) appears as a charming feature on divine and human figures, both male and female, for the first time which later on became so common in the Gupta age. The use of *sīmanta-makarikā* head-ornament formed by addorsed alligator-heads is seen for the first time in this phase. Lion head motif (*siṁhamukha, kīrtimukha* or *grāsa*) also begins to appear as on the crown of a Nāgarāja figure. The figures of grotesque dwarfs are carved with the lion face motif on the pot-belly.

A special feature of rail-decoration occurring in this phase is the design of "rosette and leaf" on the roundels of cross-bars and pillars which is ubiquitous at Nagarjunikonda. The frieze-decorations containing peeping human faces out of chaitya-window designs are depicted in the archictectural moulding of this period. Thus we see that the pearl-*yajñopavīta*, the *makarikā* ornament, the kīrtimukha motif, the chaitya-window moulding with human face, the sette with a high makaratoraṇa back and foliated scroll-work are some of the features in the last phase of Amaravati art which link it up with the subsequent style of the Gupta age.

All these features are also seen in Gupta art at distant centres like Ajanta, Sarnath, Mathura, Bagha, etc. The unity of art motifs in each period is not a little surprising. The *Kuṇḍalitapaṭa* seen in a terracotta plaque from Ahichchhatra is mentioned by Bāṇa amongst the presents sent to Harsha by Bhāskaravarmā of Kāmarūpa. These are only a couple of examples amongst thousands and it shows how the motifs of art travelled all over the country and became a part of the national style. Bāṇa also states that the pearled necklace named mandākinī was presented by Nāgārjuna to his friend, a Sātāvahaṇa King, lord of the three oceans (*trisa-mudrādhipati*) and from there through successive owners it came into the possession of Harsha, king of North India, pointing to how such objects travelled between Vengi and the North. The stone doorway of the Tejpur temple of Assam has a striking similarity with the carved doorways of the Bhumra and Deograh temples. This fact may be due to the closely knit ties of intercommunication through the Sārthavāha traders, embassies exchanged with costly presents including the choicest objects of art, pilgrims including both the rich householders who were patrons of art and the *śilpins* who created art. There emerges the fact that the people of one part of the country became interested in the art motifs developed elsewhere and the universal art consciousness resulted in the evolution of common cultural patterns. Indeed, it is mentioned in literature that the gold and silver ornaments, jewellery, carved ivories, rich textiles, embroidered fabrics of gold and filigree work and even stone sculptures as known by the discovery of Mathura images at distant centres, were regularly exported and

imported in a net-work of trade and commerce maintained by a floutishing business community.

What applied to the whole country was a phenomenon which operated from Amaravati to Nagarjunikound where we find a transference of art activity and a continuity from earlier periods most likely due to the succeeding gerenations of common workmen which was backed by the common political influences under the Ikshvāku kings.

Contents

The architectural grandeur of the Amaravati Mahāchetiya is equalled by the rich contents of its sculpture. These are shown by the varied forms of male and female headdresses, ornaments, necklaces, girdles, hair styles, and domestic objects. A noteworthy coiffure is the *Kokilakeśapāśa* showing the *veṇi* like the black cuckoo bird projecting on the top of a coiled mass of white silken cloth which is found (Śivaramamurti, pl. VII, fig. 11) also at Mathura (J55) and on an ivory plaque at Begram. [Fig. 216]. The rectangular projecting headdress of Indra is similar at Amaravati, Mathura and in Gandhara. These intimate resemblances furnish proof of vital interconnections of cultural life as expressed through fashions and fancies. In the bas-reliefs of the first period are found such scenes as the conversion of the Jaṭilas, distribution of the relics of the Buddha, the great renunciation, attack of Māra, adoration of the Enlightened Buddha, Chūḍāmaha, Worship of the Begging Bowl, elephants adoring the Stūpa, offering of the monkey to Buddha, worship of Buddhapada.

Second Period : Departure of Siddhārtha, Adoration of the Enlightened Buddha, Opening of the Rāmagrāma Stūpa, Buddha's Preaching, Turning of the Wheel-of-Law, Buddha's Enlightenment symbolised by the Bodhi-tree, Worship of the Stūpa, Buddha preaching to the Nāga, Bath of Māyā.

Third Period : Subjugation of Nalagiri and the confusion caused by him in the streets of Rājagṛiha (carved on a cross-bar medallion) ; the presents of Kind Bandhumān in which the king is presented with a golden wreath and precious sandal wood in a casket ; transporting the Bowl of the Buddha amidst three bands of figures ; Chhaddanta Jātaka ; Suddhodana and Māyā in an Aśoka Grove ; Somaṇassa Jātaka (No. 505), a prince detecting a sham ascetic; Sarvamdada Avadāna, a variant version of the Śivi Jātaka in which the king is depicted as giving protection to the dove, the hunter asking for the king's flesh and the cruel Kapilapiṅgala cutting it from the king's thigh ; Scenes from Buddha's life as Departure from the palace ; adoration of the enlightened Buddha ; Chūḍāmaha or Festival of Buddha's Crest taken to heaven by Devas ; Vidurapaṇḍita Jātaka ; Stūpa-pūjā ; conversion of the Bhaddavaggiya youths ; Avakrānti or Descent of Buddha as White Elephant ; Peacock preaching the law ; Buddha's preaching in the *trayastriṁśa* heaven ; Māndhātāvadāna (with the

following details : Chakravartī Māndhātā and his Seven Jevels, Māndhātā overcoming the Devas and the Nāgas, Māndhātā under the Pārijāta tree in heaven, in Sudharmā Sabhā, shares Indra's *ardhāsana*) ; Story of fierce Udayana ; Chakra-pūjā ; Ajātaśatru's visit to Buddha ; Snake-charmer and his monkey ; *Chulladhammapāla* Jātaka (No. 358) ; Conversion of Yaśa ; Buddha's Miracle of Fire ; Elephants adoring Bothi-tree ; Story of Aṅgulimāla ; scenes from Buddha's life (Birth of Rāhula, Departure, First Sermon, Yaśodharā, Śuddhodana despatching a messenger, Buddha visiting Kapilāvastu) ; Temptation by Māra ; Distribution of Relics ; Losaka Jātaka (No. 41) describing story of Mittavindaka the unfortunate one ; story of the gardener Sumana ; Kavikumārāvadāna ; Mahilāmukha Jātaka (No. 26) ; Dūta Jātaka (No. 260) ; Mataṅga Jātaka (No. 497) ; Chullakala's wives regaining their husband ; Mahāpanada Jātaka (No. 489) ; etc.

Fourth Period : Vessantara Jātaka ; various scenes from Buddha's life ; assault of Māra ; Enlightenment ; Rāmagrāma Stūpa guarded by serpent-kings ; Conversion of Nanda ; Rāhula-uttarādhikāra ; Dream of Māyā and its interpretation, etc.

Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa Stūpa

The last great Stūpa in the Veṅgi country was raised at Nagarjunikoda, literally Nāgārjuna's Hill, a place on the right bank of the Krishna in the Palnāḍ Taluk of the Guntur district, ninteen miles from Macherla station. This Stūpa was sited on the route towards the Karṇāṭa country, 60 miles above Amaravati as the crow flies. Nagarjunikonda was a citadel defended on the three sides by hills and on the fourth by the Kṛishṇā, and, therefore, selected as the capital of the Ikshvāku kings, known as Vijayapurī in their inscriptions. The Krishṇā, known to Ptolemy as Maisolos, was a mighty river in ancient times being much more navigable up to the sea, and, therefore, provided inter-communication amongst the various centres of Vengi as Nagarjunikonda, Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta, Ghaṇṭasāla, Gummadidurru, Bezwada, and Bhattiprolu. The Kṛishṇā valley at Vijayapurī is dotted with a number of mounds and groups of pillars marking the sites of *Maṇḍapas* and also has in its centre the ruins of a big palace. The oceanic trade with the *Dvīpāntara* islands and the Roman world as well as along the inland routes converging in the Vengi country made this a remarkable place for wealth and prosperity which became manifest in the Great Stūpa and other Buddhist establishments and monasteries found here.

The site was discovered in 1926 and fortunately being situated in the midst of hills and forests had escaped human spoliation. According to Longhurst excavations (1927-31), the discoveries included a number of ruined monasteries, apsidal temples, Stūpas, inscriptions, coins, relics, pottery, statues and over four hundred magnificent bas-relifs in the Amaravati style and belonging to the same period. These are now

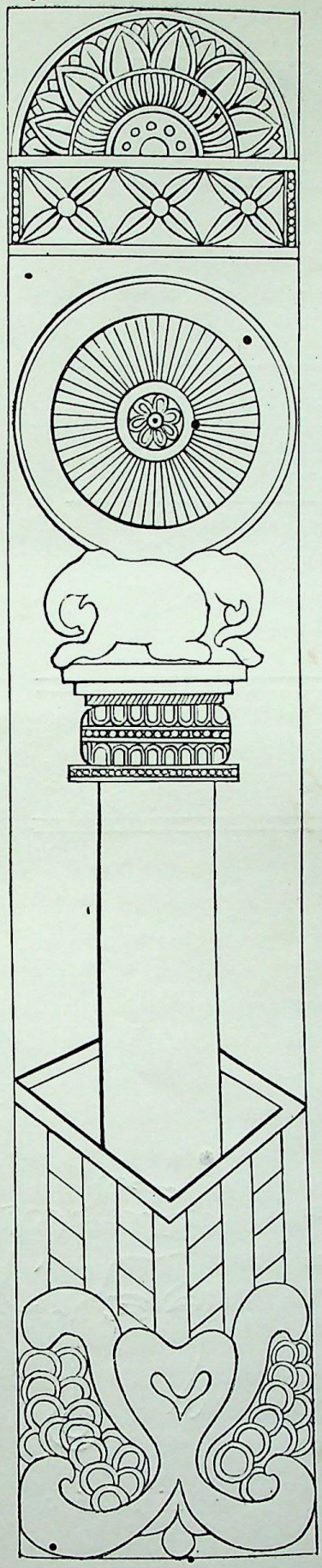
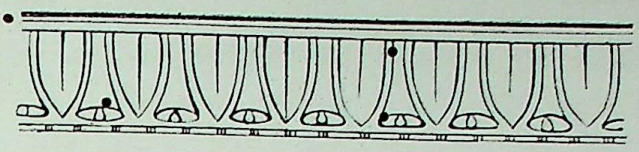


Fig. 212 a



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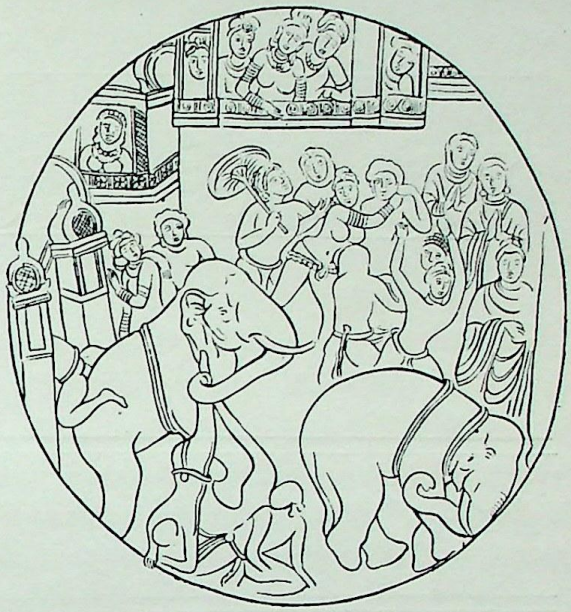

Fig. 214

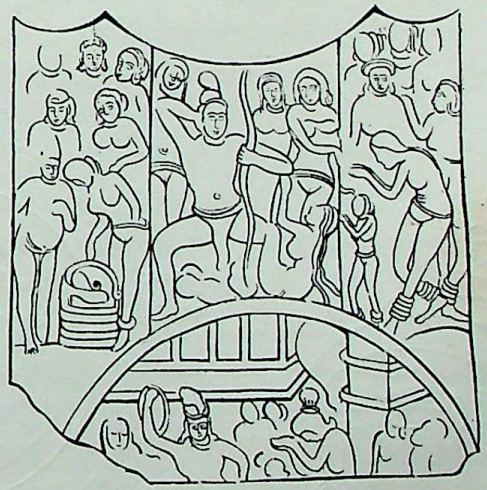

Fig. 215

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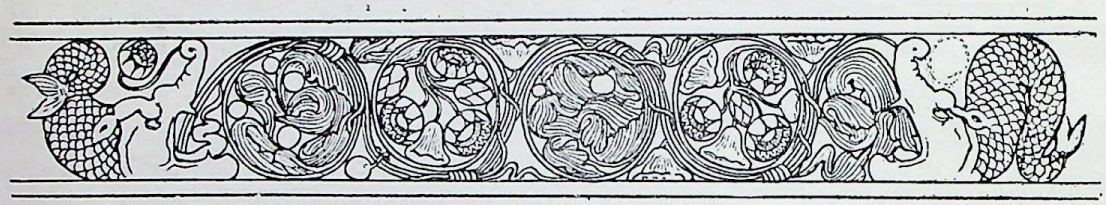

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Fig. 213

Fig. 216 a

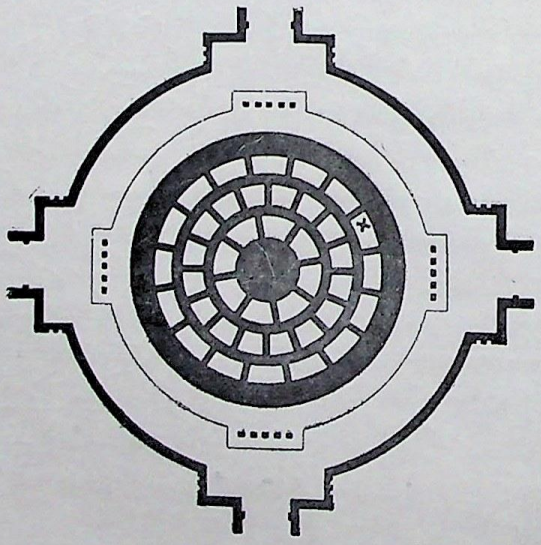


Fig. 217

Fig. 216 b

Fig. 219

Fig. 220

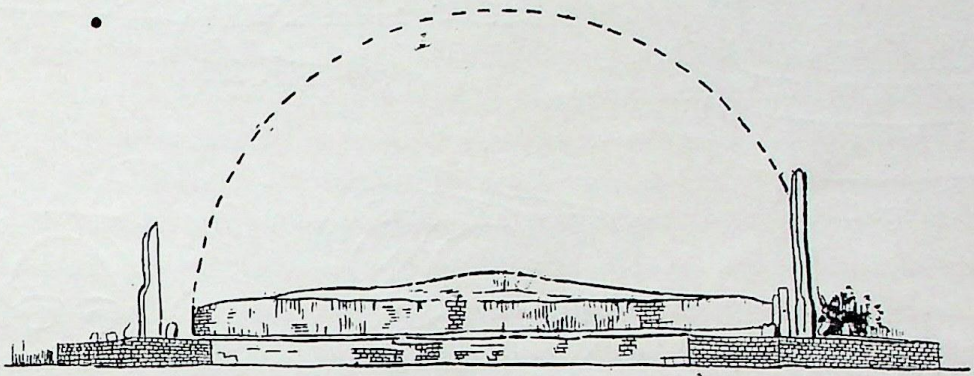
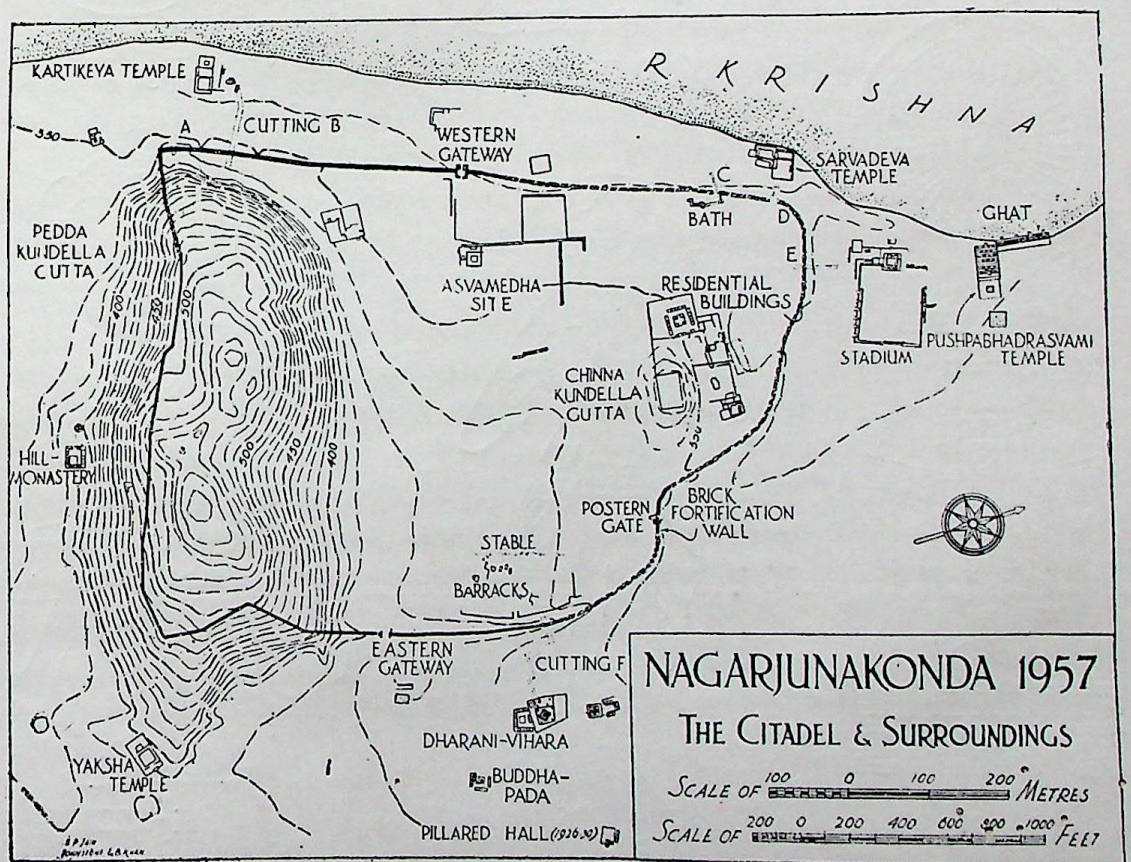


Fig. 218



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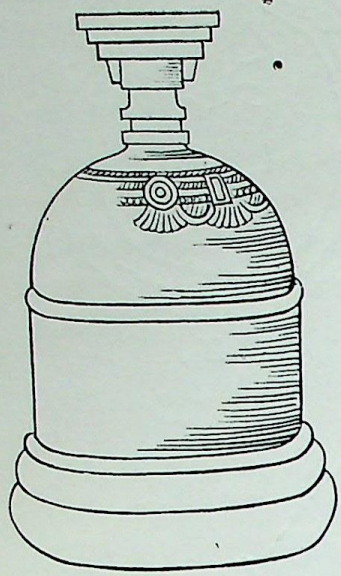
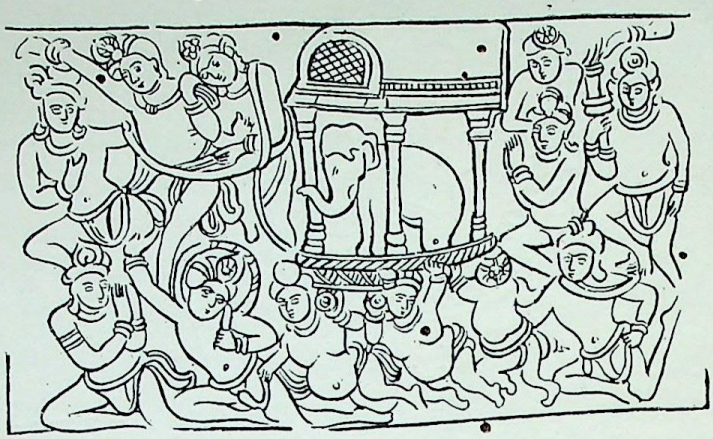


Fig. 221



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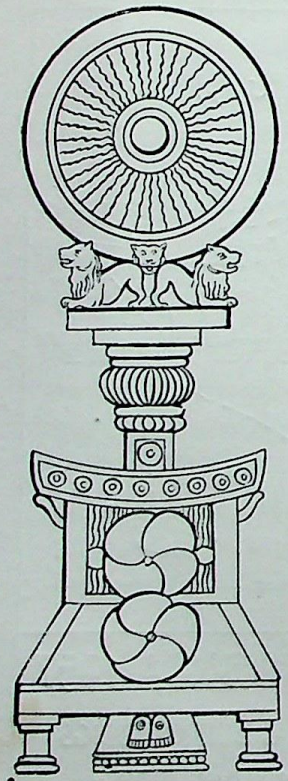

Fig. 223 a

Fig. 226

Fig. 227

stored in a local museum and this collection of sculptures and statues is the largest and finest ever made in southern India.

This work of excavation was followed by T. N. Ramachandran from 1938 to 1940, and resumed from 1954 for a period of five years to forestall the Nāgārjunsāgar dam inundation bringing to light the existence of structural remains, mostly Vihāras, Stūpas, Śilā-Maṇḍapas Chaityagṛihas, temples including those of Hārītī, Kārttikeya and Śiva.

The extensive valley of Nallamalai known as Śrīparvata in ancient times contains countless archaeological remains including the foundations and ruined buildings of the well-planned Capital of Vijayapurī of the Ikshvāku kings, who had probably their original home in Dakshiṇa Kosala and were first the feudatories (2nd half of the 2nd Cent. A. D.) of the Sātavāhanas and then independent sovereigns from the time of Vasishṭhīputra Śrī Kshāntimūla.

The kings were devoted followers of Vedic Brahmanism, but their queens were votaries of Buddhism who created the wonderful monuments of Nagarjunikonda.

Yuwan Chwang who visited the place writes about the monastery : "In the midst of long galleries with eaves for walking under and high towers, the storeyed building reaches to the height of five storeys, each storey with four halls and *vihāras* enclosed. In each *vihāra* was a statue of the Buddha cast is gold, of life size, wrought with consummate art and singularly adorned."

History and Inscriptions

No less than seventeen inscribed āyaka-pillars were found which acquiant us with the history of local Ikshvāku dynasty and the monuments. The kings were of Brāhmanical faith but the queens were Buddhist and endowed these foundations. One of the rulers was King Chāṁtimūla, whose uterine sister was Chāṁtisiri. Her name occurs in nine pillar-inscriptions and she was the main benefactress who built the Mahāchetiya in the year 6 of King Vīrapurisadata, son of Chāṁtimūla. Another inscription of this king dated in the year 20 was found at Jaggayyapeṭa. To the east of the Mahāchetiya Chāṁtisiri also dedicated in the year 18 of the king a *vihāra* and a chaityagṛiha, referred to in the inscription firstly by this name and secondly as a stone *maṇḍapa* surrounded by a cloister (*chātusāla-parigahitaṁ sela-maṁṭavam*). The building was dedicated to the *āchāryas* of Aparamahāvinaseliya sect. Besides Chāṁtisiri, paternal aunt (*pituchhā*) of the reigning king Vīrapurisadata, other ladies named in the inscriptions were also associated with these pious foundations. Another *chaityagṛiha* was built by Upāsikā Bodhisiri. It is interesting that the long inscription of Bodhisiri states that the shrine was dedicated to the

Buddhist community of Tāmraparṇi (Ceylon), who took part in the conversion to Buddhism of the people of Kashmīra, Maṇḍala, Gandhāra, Chīna, Tosali (Orissa), Aparānta (Konkan), Vaṅga, Vanavāsa (Karṇāṭa), Yavana (probably Alasanda or Alexandria) and Damila (Tamila land). She also constructed a *śilā-maṇḍapa* on the eastern gate of the Ghaṇṭasāla (Kaṇṭakaśaila) Stūpa. The hill on which her Stūpa stood is named as Chulla Dhammagiri (modern, Nāharāḷḷaḍḍu, at a distance of 2 furlongs to the east of the great Stūpa on Śrīparvata.

The inscriptions give names of two monasteries, one Kulaha Vihāra and the other Sīhala Vihāra, the latter for the Ceylonese monks. Other sects include Aparamahāvinaseliya (same as Pali, Aparaseliya, as distinguished from the Pūrvaseliyas of Amaravati), Mahīsāsaka (a subdivision of the Theravādins and appears to have flourished in the Andhra country), and Bahusuliya (Bahuśrutiya, a subdivision of the Gokulika sect belonging to the Mahāsaṅghikas). The Saṅgha besides its local organisation had also a branch named Chatudisa Saṁgha (i. e. the International Buddhist Church for the reception of foreign monks (later on referred to under this name in the Nālanda C. P. of Devapāla) which functioned with great vitality under its Āchāryas, Dhammakathikas, Desakas and Vāchakas.

The epigraphs also refer to a number of architectural terms, e. g. mahā-chetiya, mahāthūpa (Great Stūpa), mahāvihāra, vihāra, chetiyaghara, chātusāla maṇḍapa (nave with cells), padhānasālā (hall of meditation), bodhi-rukkha-pāsāda (=bodhigharaprāsāda, temple of the bodhi tree), selamaṁṭava, ovaraka (cell), aliṁdā (=alinda, entrance hall), taḍāka (pond), khaniya (cistern), khambha, selakhambha, selathambha, paṭa (slab), sapatasaṁthara (floor covered with slabs), unisa (coping-stone, but here also the frieze running along the top of the sculptured facing of a Stūpa), and dvāra (gateway). The superintendent of works, Navakammika, appointed by the royal ladies, took charge of the execution of these monuments of piety (*Navakamma*) and under his direction were employed stone-sculptors (*selavaḍhaki*) and architects (*āvesani*, Skt. *āveśanin*).[1]

The numerous ruined monuments indicate that during the second-third centuries A. D. Vijayapurī was one of the largest and most important Buddhistic settlements in Southern India and a great place of pilgrimage and a seat of learning.

1. The style of the epigraphs shows several noteworthy points which link them with early Gupta inscriptions of a century later, e. g. such epithets as *Agihot-agiṭhoma-vājapeya-aśamedhayājisa aneka-hiraña-koṭi-go-satasahasa-hala-satasahasapadāyisa savathesu apatihata-saṁkapasa, etc.* Long epithets for Buddha as found in the Divyāvadāna and Lalitavistara breathe life in these inscriptions such as *jita-kāma-krodha-bhaya-harisa-tarisa-moha-dosa-sadāpita-Māra-bala-dapa-māna-pasamana--karasa-dasa-bala-mahābalasa atha-ṁgamaga-dhama-chaka-pavatakas chaka-lakhaṇo-sukumāra-sujāta-charaṇasa taruṇa-divasa-kara-pabhasa sarada-sasi-soma-darisanasa sava-loka-chita-mahitasa Budhasa.*

A big stone-built wharf or landing place for ships (250′ × 50′ × about 6′ high along the water front) on the Krishna has also been exposed at Nagarjunikonda. All other monuments were built of large-sized bricks (20″ × 10″ × 3″, similar to those at Bulandibag and Amaravati), which were joined with mud-mortar, The walls were plastered and whitewashed (*sudhākamma*) for the purpose of painting and gilding. The *āyaka* pillars, floors and the important sculptures, both carved on the *ūrdhvapaṭṭa* slabs and free-standing, were made of white or grey limestone resembling marble and easy to work, known in ancient times as *medavaṇṇa pāsāṇa*, marrow-coloured stone, which was a local variety of marble.

Mahāchetiyas

The Stūpas of northern India are generally of solid brick-construction, but the architecture of the Stūpas at Nagarjunikonda follows the plan of a wheel, with hub (*nābhi*), spokes (*ara*) and encircling felly (*nemichakra*). The open spaces between the radiating walls forming the spokes were filled in with earth before the brick-casing of the Stūpa was built up and the dome closed. As the walls were raised towards the dome their cross-section took the form of a giant umbrella since with their curvature they were higher towards the centre and lower at the periphery. [Fig. 217].

The Stūpas were built in all sizes ; the smallest being 20′ in diameter and the biggest Mahāchetiya 120′. In the smaller Stūpas, the central hub took the form of a square pillar, but in larger ones it was circular. After the brick-work and mud-filling was finished the exterior of the Stūpa was plastered with lime, the technical process being known as *sudhākamma* and the truncated top crowned with umbrellas known as *chhatrakamma*. At the base was a drum and above it the oval dome gradually rising to a towering height of 60 to 90 feet in proportion to its diameter. At the level of the height of the drum were four projecting platforms (*āyaka-mañcha* or *mañjūshā*) with a row of five pillars (*āyaka-khambha*), which was a distinguishing feature of all the Āndhra Stūpas as already stated.

There were three flower-offering platforms called *puphādhāna* or *pushpagrahaṇi vedikā* (Mahāvaṁsa, 33.22), on each of the four sides of the Stūpa and in a line with the central one was built the *āyaka* platform. The *āyaka* platforms were regarded as the most important features of the Stūpas and no trouble or expense was spared in making them as beautiful and attractive as possible. This is shown by the sculptured slabs and lintels most beautifully carved recovered from the actual remains of the āyaka platforms of the Nagarjunikonda Stūpas.

Two types of Stūpas may be distingnished at Nagarjunikonda, viz. plain and profusely decorated. This is shown by the representations on the *Stūpa-paṭṭas*

and by the actual remains. The first one was faced with stucco work (*sudhākarma*), but gradually the conception of beautifying the Stūpa with several friezes of carved slabs developed. This was conceived as a *śilāmaya-kañchuka* or lithic robe enveloping the Stūpa, also spoken of as a *deva-dūshya* or divine garment (Mahāvaṁsa, 33.23, 25) owing to which the Stūpa was given the new name of Dussa-thūpa (Skt. *Dūshya-stūpa*, Mahāvaṁsa, 31.11). Its construction was naturally regarded as a miracle (*riddhi*). In the plain type the upper part of the dome is shown encircled by a festoon-ornament, presumably executed in plaster. The drum and *āyaka*-platforms are ornamented with the *vedikā* design and a few Jātaka scenes.

In the second type embellished with elaborate decorative frieze several rows of sculptured slabs (*ūrdhvapaṭṭa*) were added to the exterior face of the brick-work from the drum to the middle portion of the dome or the level of the *āyaka* platform above which the decoration was executed in stucco owing to the fact the curved surface of the dome did not fit in with the flat slabs. The front portion of the *āyaka*-platform was carved with the figure of Buddha or one of his life-scenes and the other slabs depicted the various Jātakas and popular life-scenes. The other friezes consisted of rows of Stūpa-paṭṭas, Puṇṇagaṭapaṅkti, Chakrapaṭṭas, dancing gods (*nachchaka devatā*), divine figures playing on musical instruments (*turiyavādaka devatā*), gods paying adoration (*añjalipaggahā devā*), women in dramatic poses (*naṭakatthi*), many other kinds of lotus (*padumaka*) and floral (*pupphapaṅkti*) decorations and animal motiis (*chatuppadapaṅkti*). The body of the Dhātugarbha was beautified with many such decorative forms (*sabbarūpaka*) and was gilded (*hemakuṭṭima*).

The Great Stūpa (Mahāchetiya, Mahāthūpa)

The Great Stūpa at Nagarjunikonda was unencased by marble slabs, but only a plain brick-structure (size of bricks, 20″ × 10″ × 3″) with a wheel-like interior having a hub and radiating walls. This was covered with plaster from top to bottom and all its decoration executed in stucco relief excepting the *āyaka*-platforms and pillars which were of marble. Its diameter was 106′, probable height of the dome 70 to 80 feet, a *pradakshiṇāpatha* on the ground floor 13′ wide, enclosed by a wooden railing erected on brick foundations. The *āryaka* platform projecting as an offset from the rising height of the dome measured 22′ in length and 5′ in width. There was an intermediate circumambulatory path about 7′ wide, also exclosed by a railing. On the top of the dome was the usual *harmikā* with a stout post in the centre which was crowned by a series of three parasols, the lowermost of which was known as Human (*Mānusha-chhatra*), the middle one as Divine (*Divya-*) and the uppermost as the symbol of Deliberation (*Vimukti-*, Mahāvaṁśa, 31.91). [Fig. 218].

These being the three parasols over the head of the Buddha, the lord of the three worlds (Trichhatradhārī Lokanātha Śāstā), it was considered essential to honour his relics with this emblem (*dhātuchhatena pūjesi*). The Stūpa-slabs show that the central *chhatrāvali* was flanked on the two sides by a series of seven parasols probably corresponding to the seven *lokas* and by figures holding garlands (*mālādhārī*), and other figures holding hands in adoration (*anjalipaggahā*) or flying *devas* holding full-vases (*pūrṇaghaṭadhārī*), or sometimes dwarfish Yaksha figures. The *āyaka* slabs showing these various details of the architecture of the big Stūpa from its bottom to the top are of the finest description and works of great merit.

The excavations exposed that there were forty inside chambers filled with earth. In one of them to the north-west, removed from the centre as was invariably the case with all the Stūpas at Nagarjunikonda, was found the relic-casket (*dhātu-mañjūshā*), containing a gold reliquary placed inside a Stūpa-shaped silver one together with a few gold flowers, pearls, garnets and crystals (*hema-pushpa* and *ratnapushpa*). No portion of any carved slab was found in the debris round the Stūpa, testifying to its originally plain character.

The inscriptions state that the Māhāchetiya was dedicated to the Buddha and hence the relics may be taken to be those of the Great Teacher. It is thus very probable that the original Stūpa was much older and it was a case of converting an *aleśākhya* into a *maheśākhya* Stūpa as often mentioned in the Divyāvadāna, and this enlargement seems to have been the work of queen Chāmtisiri.

Longhurst found nine Stūpas in the valley in a more or less ruined condition. Only four of them were embellished with highly decorative slabs of the *śilākañchuka* type which was then being evolved as the divine corpus of the Lokottara Buddha. It was this belief exemplified in the renovated Mahāchetiyas at Amaravati, Nagarjunikonda and Sarnath (Dhamekha).

Stūpas 2 and 3 although small ones, were profusely decorated with carved stone slabs and several *āyaka*-cornice stones of great beauty that were recovered from the site. In fact, the best sculptures of the art at Vijayapurī belong to these two Stūpas. Near Stūpa 2 were found an apsidal chaitya-hall and several Vihāras.

Stūpa 4 was a plain structure with *āyaka*-platforms and pillars and its chambers contained the relics of some saints or teachers who were resident in the local Vihāras. Similar was the case with Stūpa 5.

Stūpa 6 was originally of the decorative class, about 40′ in diameter, situated away from the monastic sites. It was provided with *āyaka*-platforms and pillars and the front face below the central pillar was carved with a bas-relief showing the

Buddha preaching or Turning the Wheel-of-Law. The contents of the reliquary included two thin medallions of gold bearing stamped figures of a male and a female in genuine classical type as shown by their coiffure, eyes and necks. Probably the small bone-relic in the gold casket belonged to a foreign distinguished monk teacher at this site. [Figs. 219-20].

Near Stūpa 7 was found a Vihāra having a large square maṇḍapa of 60′, with pillars and cells. The relic-casket found in Stūpa 8 is worth mentioning being the finest and most carefully made unlike the relic-caskets found in other Stūpas which were placed in ordinary small red earthenware pots, those recovered from Stūpa 8 were placed inside a stone casket shaped like a miniature Stūpa, one foot four inches high with *tee* (*i. e. harmikā*) and umbrella complete. The tiny umbrella canopy was of stone fixed to the *tee* with a small iron rod. The casket is made of four separate pieces of stone and the dome is ornamented in relief with the usual garland device. Inside the stone casket was a pottery-made casket of similar shape, 6 inches high, recovered with a pale green glaze. This again contained a copper casket 4 inches high and of similar shape to the last. Within the latter was a small silver casket, 2 inches in height, containing a beautiful little gold reliquary in the from of a Stūpa, 1½ inches high. The latter contained a bone relic, gold lotus and jasmine flowers and a few decayed pearl and coral beads. (Longhurst). [Fig. 221].

Stūpa 9 (42′ in diameter) was of the cased type with a good number of beautifully sculptured slabs most of which were recovered.

In the later excavations of 1954 some more Stūpas, Vihāras and temples were exposed, built on the same wheel-like architectural pattern (*chetiyāvaṭṭa*). A shrine of the goddess Hārītī built on the hill and approached by a flight of steps was brought to light. The seated image is in style of 4-5th century A.D. Two more temples of Śiva (Pushpabhadraswāmin) and Kārttikeya are also worth mentioning.

Palace

As regards the citadel area of Vijayapurī, remains of its ditch, city-gates and the grand fortification wall (*prākāra*) were found, which belonged to the flourishing period of the Ikshvāku kings, formed important components of the toun-planning of that age. The citadel wall which is 16′ high in some places could be traced in two phases; the earlier one being a mud rampart 80′ wide at the base (*vapra*) resting on the earth. The second phase was represented by a burnt-brick wall, 9 to 14 feet thick, generally built either directly on the existing rampart or on a secondary filling over it, but on naturally high grounds directly on the bare rock-surface. The lofty fortification wall was surrounded on all sides, excepting for the hilly portion

on the south side, by a ditch (*parikhā, khāta*), 12′ in depth and varying from 74 to 132 feet in width.

The eastern gateway led into the extensive first court—*Prathama Kakshyā*—in which barracks for soldiers, stables for royal horses (*Rāja-mandurā*) and a nicely-plastered masonry cistern (*pushkarīṇī*) have been found tallying with the architectural planning of the capital city and palace. The western gateway with a minimum width of 17′, faced the Kṛishṇā, and in the north side of the wall was a postern gate (*pārśvadvāra*) to serve the palace. [Fig. 222].

STADIUM (*Ākrīḍā* or *Mallaśālā*)

A unique monument exposed at Nagarjunikonda to the north of the citadel is the *Ākrīḍa* or the place of wrestling tournaments, *Mallaśālā*, also called *Akshavāṭaka*. Although described many a time in literary texts actual examples are not preserved excepting this unique building at Vijayapurī sited along the bank of the Kṛishṇā. It appears that this arena or ground for wrestling contests was conceived on a grand scale and the royalty seated under the central pavilion on the wertern side also witnessed the bouts. According to the excavator :

Oriented along the cardinal points, the stadium, consisted of a central arena, 309′ long, 259′ wide and 15′ deep, enclosed on all four sides by flights of steps with 2′ wide treads and having a pavilion on the west, the all constructed of burnt bricks. In continuation of the topmost steps, there was a platform all round, the width of which as noted on the southern side, was 11′. On this side six staircases, placed at regular intervals, each measuring 6′ in width, connected the arena with the platform. They were strengthened by wooden or stone nosings, for the fitting of which slits were provided on side in the structure. Both treads and risers of the staircases were smaller than those of the steps that ran around the stadium, indicating that while the former served as passages the latter were evidently meant for sitting. The pavilion, at the middle of the western side, showed three distinct phases. Square or oblong holes in the floors of the first and second phases suggested the use of pillars for holding the roof, of which tiles and finials were found all over the area. The dimensions of the pavilions of the three phases, beginning from the earliest, were respectively 48′ × 39′, 69′ × 33′ and 50′ × 44′. Associated with the latest pavilion was an enclosure-wall, with an entrance on the west. The debris of the structures of the third phase was covered with a 9′ thick layer of dark silt, which was disturbed and finally sealed by a 10′ to 12′ thick deposit of sand. A 2′ wide drain passing through the northern wall of the stadium, cleared out the rain-water from the arena.[1]

1. *Indian Archæology, A Review*, 1957–58, pp. 7-8.

SCULPTURE

The Nagarjunikonda Stūpas like that at Amaravati are remarkable for the wealth of their sculptures. The carved slabs are rich in beauty and contents. They were fixed in the drum, dome and the *āyaka*-platforms. The favourite scenes depicted on these slabs were generally representations of Stūpas (*Stūpapaṭṭa*), while those ornamenting the *āyaka*-platforms portrayed the Buddha or his life-scenes. Above the drum the slabs decorating the base of the dome were also about 2′ in width and from 3 to 4 ft. in height and cut on the curve, that is with a slightly convex front and a concave back to fit the curved surface of the dome. The front of the slab was divided into two or three separate horizontal panels with an ornamental border at the top which formed the frieze around the dome and also denoted the cessation of the stone work, as above this line, all ornamentation was in plaster owing to the difficulty of fixing stone slabs to the curved surface of the dome. Sometimes, the frieze was built separately with smaller horizontal slabs specially cut for the purpose and the favourite design for such slabs was the festoon device in the form of figures carrying huge garland (*mālādhārī devāḥ*).

The following scenes are depicted on the slabs found by Longhurst: 1. Bodhisattva in the Tushita Heaven being exhorted by the Devas to take birth on the earth. The Bodhisattva is seated in the centre on a throne with right leg flexed and left hanging down (*ardhamahārājalīlāsana*), with right hand in the attitude of accepting the request and a number of eight divine figures standing and seated around him. The composition is well conceived with a symmetry that is usual on the Veṅgi slabs and the neat beauty of the carvings is as attractive as possible; all the figures being embellished by conspicuous crowns and ornaments. The slab is framed on the top by a three-fold frieze consisting of a meandering lotus garland, a line of lions (*Vyāghra-paṁkti*) and a row of triratna symbols (*triratna-paṁkti*) (Longhurst, pl. XIX c).

2. Descent of Bodhisattva in the form of a white elephant (*Garbhāvakrānti*). The Bodhisattva is being worshipped by Devas and his *Vimāna* is being transported on the shoulders of Devas (Longhurst, pl. XIX d). [Fig. 223]

3. Interpretation of Dream (*svapna kathana*). King Śuddhodana hearing the dream of Māyā Devī summoned an astrologer to interpret the dream, who declared that the queen would give birth to a son who would either be an universal monarch (a Chakravartī) or a Yogī Buddha. On the left are shown King Śuddhodana and queen Māyā seated on their respective thrones with female attendants. On the right are four seated figures, apparently four Devas to protect Māyā in her pregnancy. Below is the soothsayer in the form of an old Brāhmanical Ṛishi. The central figure holding a spouted waterpot is Indra.

4. Birth and Seven Steps—Queen Māyā Devī is standing in *tribhaṅgī* pose under a blossoming Śāla tree of much bigger size than usual with a female chowri-bearer on left and a spouted water jar. The presence of the jar is indicative of the First Bath. A female figure is repeated on the right side with a *chhatra* and two chawries over her head under a spreading Śāla tree. Figures of four Lokapāla gods hold, indicative of the royal presence of the Bodhisattva, the long scarf bearing the marks of the first seven steps of the Bodhisattva. The seven steps (*sapta-pada*) was an ancient Vedic symbol having reference to the seven component parts of creation and admitted into the Buddhist cosmology as illustrated here so prominently. The Nativity (*jāti*) and the Seven Steps are graphically treated in bas-relief in plate 20 (b) of Longhurst.

5. ARRIVAL OF ASITA :—Buddha's birth was an event of great rejoicings in the heavenly world of the 33 gods (*trayastriṁśa svarga*) and also the royal palace of Kapilavastu. Asita, an old Brahmanical Ṛishi hearing of the news came to the royal palace, cast the horoscope at the request of the king and foretold the future greatness of the child. The sculptured slab (Longhurst pl. XXI (a)) shows the scene of the presentation of child Buddha at the Śākyavardhana Chaitya. Queen Māyā Devī is presenting the child to the deity who stands up in a human form and offers his adoration with folded hands to the Bodhisattva whose foot-prints are stamped on a cloth flanked by two Chawri-bearers. On right side under a pavilion is seated king Śuddhodana on a royal throne having a high backed *toraṇa*, a couple of Chawri-bearers stand at the back, Queen Māyā is standing with folded hands, in front is seated an old sage with a spiral pile of matted locks on his head and the child Buddha in his arms shown by two small foot-prints on a scarf.

6. THE GREAT RENUNCIATION (*Abhiniṣhkramaṇa*) :—Part of the panel is lost but what remains shows on the left Gautama giving his ornaments to Chhanda and bidding him return with horse to Kapilavastu. Standing behind the Bodhisattva is the hunter with whom he exchanges garments. Three gods in añjali-mudrā await the cutting of the hair to take it to heaven. In the righthand corner of the panel Chhanda and the horse are depicted returning home (Longhurst, pl. XXI (b)).

7. TRANSPORTATION OF GAUTAMA'S HEADDRESS TO HEAVEN AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHŪḌĀMAHA FESTIVAL :—This is a favourite subject of the Andhra sculptors which they have depicted with great zest and joyous feeling. In the centre a dancing *Deva* figure with two other *Devas* is transporting the basket with the bejewelled head-dress and the large number of dancing and merrymaking *Devas* frame the panel on the four sides (Longhurst pl. XXII (a)).

8. ASSAULT OF MĀRA AND ENLIGHTENMENT (*Māra-dharshana, Saṁbodhi*):— In this panel Māra is depicted on the left in a mood of discomfiture with two of his daughters baffled in their attempt to tempt the Buddha. In the right side is a host of Māra's demons armed with weapons and shown with ugly faces. The majestic figure of the haloed Buddha is shown in the centre seated in *Padmāsana* under the Bodhi tree (Longhurst, pl. XXII (b)).

Another panel depicts the Buddha protected against rain by the canopy of hoods of the Nāga Muchalinda who dwelt in a neighbouring pond of the Uruvilva village at Bodha Gayā.

9. DECISION OF THE BUDDHA TO BECOME A TEACHER OF THE MANKIND:— When the Buddha had attained enlightenment he first fasted for 49 days seated at the foot of the Bodhi tree. This scence is seldom depicted outside Gandhāra where the skeletal frame of ascetic has been shown in several good sculptures. After accepting Sujātā's milky food Buddha remained in doubt if he should impart knowledge to others. The Devas then entreated of him and he accepted their request to teach mankind what he had himself learnt. In this panel Buddha seated in a lotus-pose under the Bodhi tree is surrounded by a group of divine figures making their humble prayer to him to became the universal teacher (Longhurst, pl. XXIII (a)).

10. FIRST SERMON :—Prevailed upon by the prayers of gods, Buddha decided to preach his law and thought of his five companions who were then living in the Deer Park at Sarnath a suberb of Varanasi. He came there and delivered the First Sermon known as the turning of the law (*Dharmachakra pravartana*) (Longhurst, pl. No. 24 (a)). In the panel the haloed figure of Buddha is seated on a raised platform marked by two antelopes in front and flanked by two Chawri-bearers, two mendicant figures and two princely figures. The identification is not quite certain and it may combine the First Sermon with the conversion of Yaśa.

11. Amongst other scenes the slabs show the Buddha holding two relic-caskets with spouted vases before a group of Nāgas,—such reliquaries really being found inside the Stūpas (Longhurst, pl. XXIV (b)) ; Converston of king Kappina (Longhurst, pl. XXV (a)), a Chakravartin surrounded by Seven Jewels (Longhurst, pl. XXX (b)), Conversion of Yaksha Ālavaka (Longhurst pl. XXXI (b)), Siddhārtha stringing the mighty bow, subjugation of the elephant Nālāgiri (Longhurst, p. XXXII (b)); Dīpaṅkara paying homage to the Buddha (Longhurst, XXXIV (a)), admission of the six Śākya princes and the barber Upālī to the order (Long. XXXIV (b)); Buddha and Nanda on a visit to heaven (XXXV (a)), the gift of earth, in the left side panel of

which occurs the most beautiful standing femal figure on a *siṅgha-makara* base ever rendered in Andhra art ; the novice Suvana and the Nāga king Paṇṇaka (pl. XXXVII (a)), Lady Amarā and the four wise men, Chāmpeyya Jātaka (XXXVIII (b)), Māndhātā Jātaka (IXL (a b)), Nāga king Apalāla subdued by the Buddha (XL (a b)), Śibi Jātaka XLII (a), Buddha visited by Indra and Pañchaśikha Gandharva XLIV (a-b) ; Daśarātha Jātaka (XLV (a)) Mahāpaduma Jātaka (XLV (b)), Ghaṭa Jātaka (XLVI (a)), Dighiti-kosala Jātaka (XLVII (a)). The sculptures from the Nāgarjunīkoṇḍa Stūpas illustrate a quality of plastic art in which the perfect chiselling done by the great masters has left behind permanent records of beauty seldom attained elsewhere. The smaller panels specially dividing the slabs from each other or their wider panels and consisting of pairs of male and famale figures in different poses (*Nāṭaka strī*) are examples of perfect beauty dwelling out from the hearts of great masters with long experience behind them. A detailed study of the scenes on both kinds of slabs demonstrates that the decorative motifs of preceding Śuṅga and Kushāṇa art on the one hand and coming Gupta art on the other are represented in the transitional style of the Kṛishṇā Valley. Many of the Buddhist scenes depicting the Jātaka and the life details of Buddha were now reorganised by the Andhra artisans with such elaboration as holds good in Gupta art, e. g. the Chāmpeyya Jātaka and the Assault of Māra. The pictorial quality obtained by these sculptors creates the foremost impression in which the detailed execution, the clear composition and the ornate nature of the human figures with definite iconographic details and the integrated accomplishment of the decorative scheme of the drum and the dome and the Āyaka platforms, were conceived in great detail but with superb mastery and skill. The sweet delicacy of carving (*mādhurya*), life-like expressing, rippling movement in the limbs of the figure, the dancing poses on the two sides of the vertical line (*lasatīva cha bhūlambaḥ*), the rendering of all kinds of difficult poses, the metal-like details of carving,[1] the fondness for numerous figures to crowd the composition in a peripheral frame round the conspicuous central figure of the scene, such charming qualities make Andhra art its high rank in the story of Indian aesthetic endeavours.

1. *Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 43.21.

CHAPTER XIII

INDIAN TERRACOTTAS

The clay-figurines of India occupy a respectable place in the domain of her artistic activity. The material is rich, of high antiquity, and covering a wide range of subjects, may also lay claim to some aesthetic quality. Right from the Indus Valley to our own times, clay-figurines have remained a constant feature of Indian art. The modeller's art long outlived that of the sculptor. The monumental brick temples of Bengal provide examples of moulded figurines and ornamental brick-work of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when stone sculpture altogether disappeared.

At several old sites in north India both human and animal clay-figurines have been exposed in profuse numbers. On their basis a periodwise typological inventory may be drawn up.

Literary references to terracotta art are known in the epics and subsequent literature. According to the *Mahābhārata*, Ekalavya, pupil of Droṇa, made a likeness of his teacher in clay for worship[1]. Aśvapati, king of Madra, as a child made small clay figurines of horses as toys[2]. In the *Bhaddasāla Jātaka* reference is found to princes receiving presents of elephants, horses and other toys from their mother's father[3]. The drama *Mṛichchhakaṭika* derives its name from a clay toy-cart with which Rohasena, the infant son of Chārudatta amused himself. A wheeled toy-horse being pulled with a string by a small Yaksha figure is represented in Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa sculpture[4]. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, a clay image of Durgā (*mahīmayī-mūrti*) is installed for worship[5]. Kālidāsa refers to a painted clay peacock in the hands of child Bharata.[6]

The clay-figurines in the Gupta period looked charming being coloured and treated with painted lines to indicate striped and checkered drapery, black hair, eyebrows, etc. For the period c. 400-700 A. D. more numerous, better and bigger specimens of clay-figurines are available, as well a richness of literary references to them. Bāṇabhaṭṭa speaks of the modeller as *lepyakāra* and *pustakṛit*. Buddhaghosha

1. *Kṛitvā Droṇaṁ mahīmayam*, Ādiparva (Poona ed.), Ch. 123, 12.
2. *Karoti aśvāṁścha mṛiṇmayān*, Vanaparva, Ch. 294, 13.
3. *Jātaka*,465, text, p. 146 ; translation, *Hatthirūpaka-assarūpakādīni āharāpayamānāni*.
4. Longhurst, *Sculptures at Nagarjunikoṇḍa*, pl. IX (c).
5. *Tau tasmin Puline devyāḥ Kṛitvā mūrtiṁ mahīmayīm,Durgāsaptaśatī*, XIII, 7.
6. *Varṇa-chitrita-mṛittikā-mayūra*, *Śakuntalā*, Act VII.

refers to clay platic art as *potthaka-rūpa*, to ivory as *dānta-rūpa* and to metal as *loha-rūpa*. Rājaśekhara (A. D. ninth century) describes the modeller taking his seat with a painter (*chitra-lepya-kṛitaḥ*), a laipdarist, a goldsmith and other artists in the western wing of the king's *Sabhā*[1]. Harisheṇa's reference (tenth century A. D.) to an expert modeller executing at the request of a king a colossal stucco image[2] reminds of the large-sized stucco images similar to those surviving in the ruins of the Nālandā monastery. The terracotta and brick monuments of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods like the brick temples at Bhitargāon (Kanpur district) and Sīrpur (Raipur district) and the Stūpas at Pāhārpur and Mahāsthān (Bogra district) bespeak the architectural heights this art had once attained. The beautiful terracotta plaques from the frieze of the terraced Śiva temple at Ahichchhatrā (Bareli district) and the Buddhist Stūpa at Mīrpurkhās, Sind, likewise illustrate rich documentation of religious subjects through the medium of terracotta art. The tradition of producing moulded plaques of big size continued later for about a thousand years up to the eighteenth century as seen in the brick temples of Kashmir and Bengal.

The earliest figurines, all hand-modelled, belong to the Indus Valley (c. 2500 B. C.) represented mainly by (1) female figurines and (2) animals and birds. The former represent the Mother Goddess, whose worship was once popular amongst many peoples of antiquity from the Mediterranean to the Gangetic valley. The Vedic epithets '*Mahī Mātā*' and '*Mahānagnī*' seem to refer to her. These archaic figurines show a steatopygous type with prominent breasts, and deep navel and loaded with profuse symbolic ornamentation, such as the elaborate head-dress, several necklaces over breasts, and a prominent girdle round the loins. This tradition continued and is traceable in the clay figurines exposed in north India at several historical sites of the Maurya and Śuṅga periods. The Indus Valley female figurines are rudimentary as specimens of art, but marked by bold expression. The animal figurines, on the other hand, both of faience and clay are much more finished and realistic. In the figurines of a bull and a tiger the vigour and charm of animal life are seen at their best,

The clay-figurines of the historical period although separated from those of the Indus Valley by an interval of about twenty centuries, nevertheless show links of styles and subject-matter. On the technical side the earliest figurines from Pāṭaliputra, Ahichchhatrā and Mathurā are all hand-modelled like those of the Indus Valley. The use of moulds appears for the first time in the late Maurya or early Śuṅga period about the third-second century B. C. Definitely datable Maurya material is yet scanty, its main reason being the absence of accurately recorded excava-

1. *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, ch. X, Gaekwad Oriental Series, p. 55.
2. *Bṛihatkathākosha*,

tions. However, clay-figurines from the Patna sites like Patna City, Bulandibagh, Kumrāhār, Buxar etc., may be ascribed to the Maurya age. Stylistically there are several distinct types which must have preceded in time the known types of the Śuṅga period. The most remarkable are those unearthed in the excavations at Pāṭaliputra, consisting mainly of a type of female figure with elaborate head-dress and panniered skirt somewhat oversized and spread out on the two sides of the legs like wings. A remarkable specimen comes from the Patna Museum (ht. 11.5″). On the technical side the figure is entirely modelled by hand except for the head pressed out of a mould, later on a good number of applique decorations were attached ; for example, a couple of falling locks on the protuberance of the head-dress, surmounted by a full-blown lotus, another disc or lotus in the centre of the two projections, a cylindrical ornament in the right ear and a disc in left, a bangle on the fore-arm, a necklace round the neck and a festooned girdle with pendant bells on the waist. The right arm is flexed at the elbow and the hand, now lost, pointed upwards in an appropriate gesture. The entire pose is obviously that of a female dancer. [Fig. 227]. About the identity of these figures nothing can be definitely made out, but they undoubtedly show a distinctive ethnic type different from the more usual female faces on the plaques of the Śuṅga period.

Another figure, remarkable in several ways, was found in the Golakhpur excavations at Patna (ht. 6″), being a female torso. In its pose, plastic modelling of the body and rich ornamentation, it approximates the Didarganj Yakshī type. Its bust and torso appear to have been first modelled by hand and then moulded ornaments were affixed. She is wearing a thick garland round the neck with a tassel on the back, and a long double necklace of round and elongated beads with a clasp near the left breast having a pearl terminal, arranged from left shoulder to right hip and on back in the manner of the much later *vaikakshyakà* garlands. A broad tight belt is fastened round the narrow waist having a central clasp with three long tassels on the left thigh and the lower end of the scarf tucked under it. On the hips is again a broad loose girdle of four strings with beads of varying designs in each. The figure, assignable to circa 200 B. C., is a beautiful specimen of the early Indian terracotta art. [Fig. 228].

Basārh (ancient Vaiśālī) was another flourishing centre of Śuṅga clay figurines. A plaque (ht. 5½″) shows a figure standing in the midst of lotuses with two long stems held in the hands on the waist. It is remarkable for a pair of wings on the shoulders. The breasts are inconspicuous as those in male figures. The ornaments consist of discular rings in ears, a flat torque, armlets, profuse bangles and wristlets with pearl pendants, a broad girdle and anklets. In terms of iconography it cannot

be definitely identified. The abundance of lotuses points towards a kindred Śrī Lakshmī type. The wing-like appendages may have been a borrowed feature connecting it with the winged Cupid type. Two small holes pierced under the armpits point to the figure being hung on a wall. [Fig. 229].

Another specimen allied both in type and ornamentation was found at Kosam and is in the Allahabad Municipal Museum ($5'' \times 3\frac{3}{4}''$). It is undoubtedly a male figure although wearing the same type of conspicuous ornaments. Its hands hang by the side between two lotuses springing from below. A wing preserved at the back of the right shoulder connects it with a winged Cupid type. [Fig. 230]. In Indian mythology Kāmadeva is believed to be the son of Lakshmī and this may explain the intimate association of this figure with lotuses, its formal affinity with the Śrī-Lakshmī type.

The best of the Śuṅga clay-figurines, however, are secular plaques representing men and women in scenes of merry-making and love. Nowhere else was this art inspired with such aesthetic feeling and informed with such a variety of subjects as at Kauśāmbī the ancient capital of King Udayana. Here stone sculpture is very limited, but clay-figurines in Śuṅga art are numerous and of high perfection. A typical instance is the plaque ($4\frac{1}{4}'' \times 3\frac{1}{2}''$) in the Lucknow Museum, showing a couple, the female in the embrace of her partner and both seated on a rich couch (*paryaṅkikā*) with carved legs and a railing on three sides. Small rosettes (*phullāvalī*) are strewn in the background.

Another Kauśāmbī plaque in the Allahabad Museum ($2'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$) shows a Bacchanalian scene, with a woman and a man seated opposite each other on wicker chairs (*vetrāsana*). The female figure holds in uplifted right hand a wine jar with a lid (*surā-ghaṭa*), and embraces with left arm her partner; the male figure holds a small cup in right hand and a flute in left. Both are wearing typical headdresses as seen on male and female heads in the Bharhut sculpture. [Fig. 231].

The small clay cart from Kosam showing a picnic party (*goshṭhī-yāna*, $6'' \times 5''$) is a unique specimen of its kind. The party consists of six figures, four male and two females, divided into two groups of three each reclining against the sides of the cart. On proper right the first male figure is holding a harp in left hand and a plectrum in right, and next is an amorous couple, the male kissing the lower lip of the female (*adhara-chumbana*). On the other side is first a reclining male figure and his female friend with her back towards him, and next a male figure looking like a jester, in his dress and expression. In front of the figures is a big dish with eatables including radishes, round cakes and *gunjhiyās*, and a round jar or container for drinks (*surā-ghaṭa*) with a lid on it. The cart is richly upholstered

with ribbed cushions on the sides. We actually have a reference to *goshṭhī-yāna*, "picnic wagon", and to red radish being served at the drinking party (*āpānaka-madhya-pravishṭa-raktamūlaka*) in the drama *Mṛichchhakaṭika*.[1]

A terracotta (ht. 3½″) from Kosam shows a dancing female figure holding the stalk of a lotus (*līlākamala*) in right hand and left hand raised across the slightly bent head.

Another figure from the same place (ht. 5¼″) shows a smiling female dancer standing in graceful posture, resting the weight of her body on right foot and having the left knee slightly bent and the two hands clasped in front. She is wearing a voluted turban on head, a double pearl-string on the fore-head, a round ear-ring in right ear and a cylindrical drum in left ear, a flat torque round neck and a pearl necklace on the breasts, heavy wristlets and a broad girdle of flattened and fluted beads.

What may be taken as the typical Śuṅga style in clay-figurines consists of stamped thin plaques in low relief with a frontal pose. Such figurines come from widely separated sites, like Mathura, Ahichchhatrā, Kauśāmbī, Pāṭaliputra and so far east as Bangarh in Bengal.

A notable example in the group of Kosam terracottas is the female figure, now in the Indian Institute, Oxford.[2] Its headgear is distinguished by two prominent side-rolls of a turban flanking a central boss stamped with fioral design and a band of sacred symbols, probably to mark the divine character of the figure. [Fig. 232]. Similar female figures forming part of Mithuna plaques of early period (200-100 B. C.) with three sacred symbols, viz. an arrowhead, a banner and a goad stuck on one side of the head, have been found at Ahichchhatrā also.[3] [Fig. 233].

In a beautiful fragmentary piece from Kosam (2½″ X 3½″) we see a smiling female head with elaborate head-dress showing five flowery streaks stuck on the right side and an equal number of sacred symbols on the left. The goad (*aṅkuśa*) and battle-axe (*paraśu*) are distinct, the others may be a mirror (*darpaṇa*), a jewel-bowl (*ratna-pātra*) and a celestial mansion (*deva-vināna-gṛiha*). Some of these sacred symbols are repeated in the head-dress of another Śuṅga specimen of similar style of hair and head-dress from Bangarh is Bengal (ht. 2¾″) assignable to about the first century B. C. The figurines with the sacred symbols seem to have been intended to represent a goddess, probably the Mother Goddess of antiquity.

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1. Acts VI and VIII.
2. E. H. Johnston, 'A Terracotta Figure at Oxford', *Journal of the India Society of Oriental Art*, (1942), pp. 94-102.
3. V. S. Agrawala, 'Terracotta Figurines of Ahichchhatrā', *Ancient India*, No. 4 (January 1948), p. 110, Nos. 11 and 12.

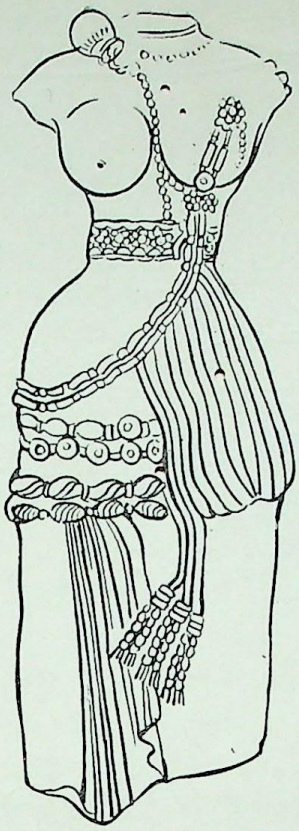

Fig. 228

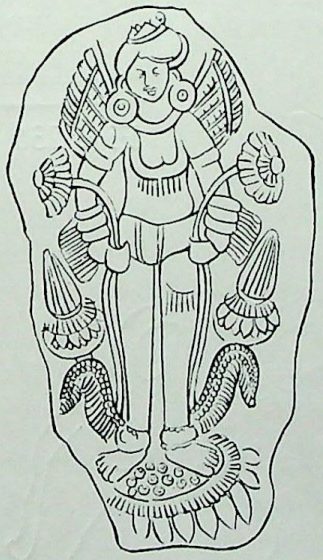

Fig. 229

Fig. 232

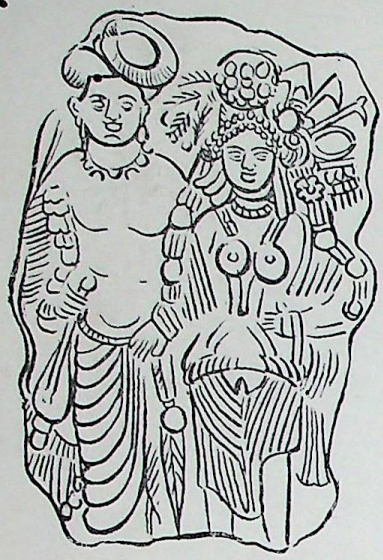

Fig. 230

Fig. 231

Fig. 233

Fig. 235

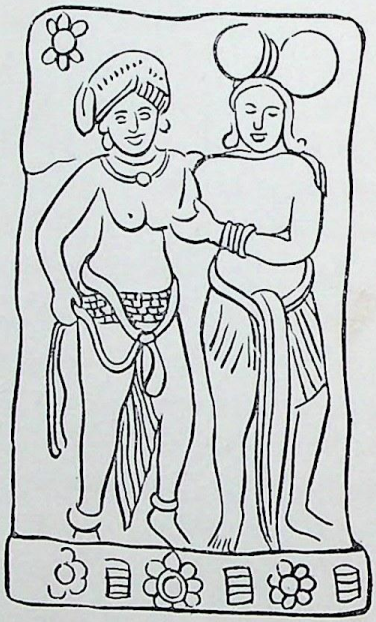

Fig. 234

Fig. 236

Fig. 237 a

Fig. 237 b

Fig. 238

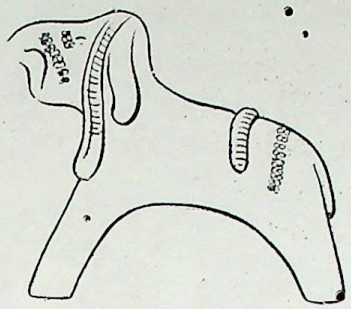

Fig. 239

Figs. 243-44

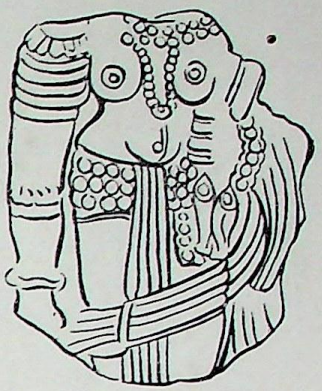

Fig. 245

Fig. 241

Fig. 242

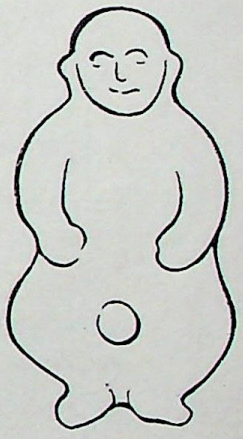

Fig. 246

Fig. 240

Fig. 247

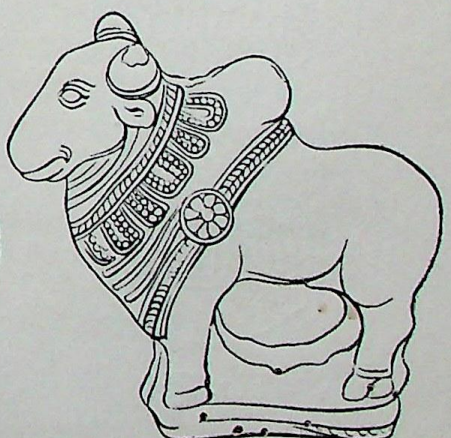

Fig. 248

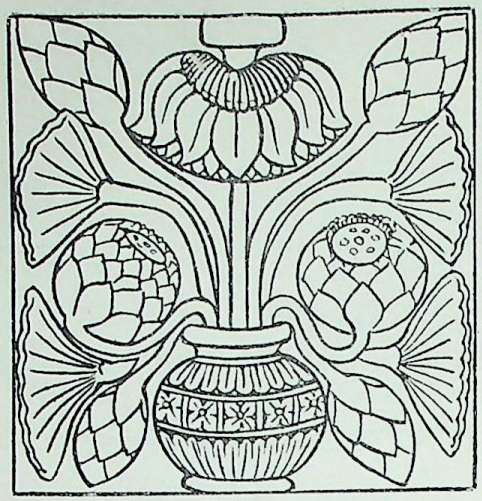

Fig. 249

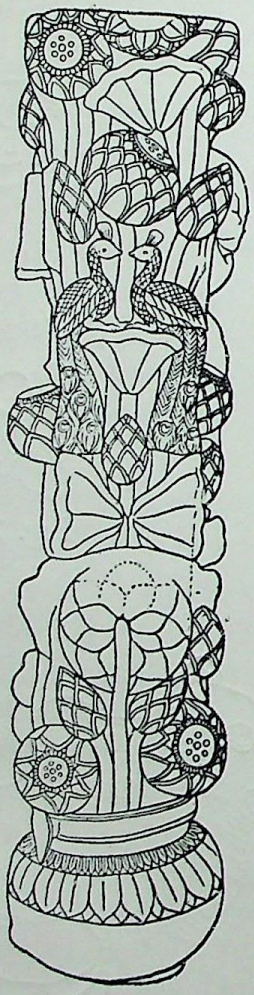

Fig. 251

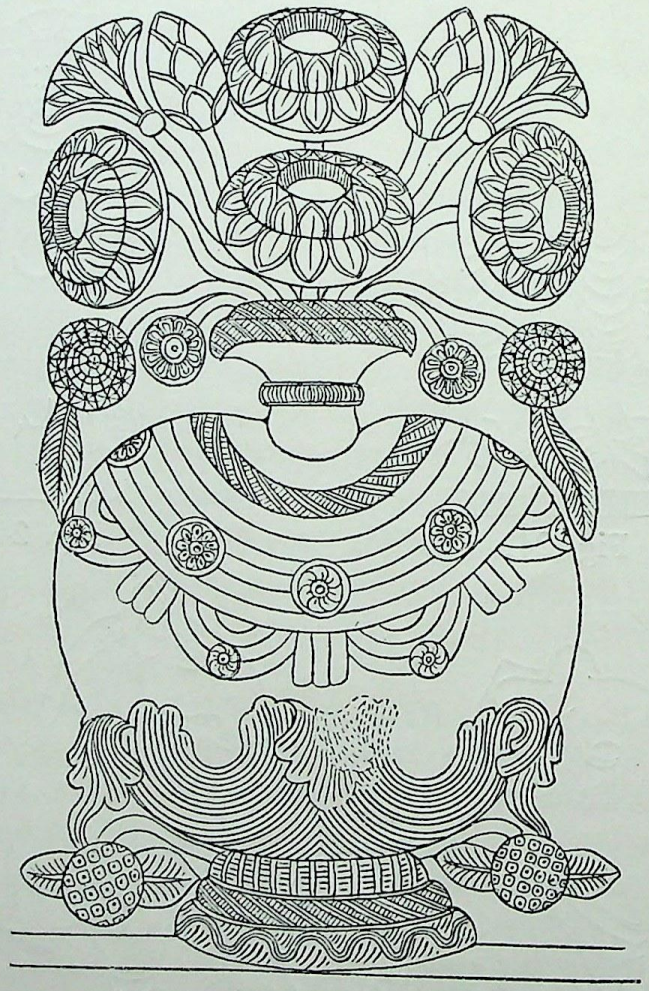

Fig. 250

The Mithuna or "Man and Woman" standing side by side, is the leading type in the Śuṅga figurines of Ahichchhatrā. [Fig. 234] The plaques are moulded and must have followed the moulded-cum-modelled figurines of the Mother Goddess type, marking a transition from the religious to secular types. The female figure wears sacred symbols in her head-dress, and necklace, but her male companion is dandily dressed and carries a harp (Ahichchhatrā)[1]. The Mithuna or 'Man and Woman' type was followed somewhat later by a sub-type designated as the Dampatī or "Husband and Wife" type in the plaques from Ahichchhatrā[2]. The Mithuna and the Dampatī types may be thus distinguished :

(i) In the Mithuna plaques the female figure stands on proper right, but in the Dampatī ones on proper left.

(ii) The Mithuna plaques although rectangular have irregular edges ; the Dampatī plaques on the other hand have straight edges pressed out of regular moulds, decorative borders and flowers and small rosettes in the background.

(iii) The Mithuna figures are more heavily loaded with ornamentation than the Dampatī figures.

(iv) The Dampatī figures show drapery, ornaments, female coiffure, heavy male turban, round facial type and flat relief that are similar to the historical specimens of Śuṅga sculpture.

(v) The Mithuna plaques are marked by a religious feeling ; nowhere do they depict amorous subjects, but the Dampatī figures are those of men and women in love.

The relative stratification at Ahichchhatrā shows the Mithuna (c. 200-100 B. C.) to have proceded the Dampatī Type (c. 100 B. C.-A. D. 100), the latter continuing into the Kushāṇa and Gupta periods also. A typical Gupta plaque from Rājghāṭ is now in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan (ht. 3½″), depicting embracing Dampatī figures.

A significant fact of terracotta art-history is the existence of figurines in each period showing foreign influence. For example, there is a limited group of figurines datable to the late Śuṅga and early Kushāṇa periods showing Parthian influence, and found at such remote sites as Basārh, Rājghāṭ, Kosam, Mathurā and Ahichchhatrā. The presence of wings on shoulders has been noticed in a limited number of similar figures at Basārh, Kosam and Mathurā. A second group shows female figures with a special kind of swaddling drapery with heavy folds covering the whole body and

1. *Ibid.*, p. 110, Fig. 12.
2. *Ibid.*, p, 113, Fig. 22.

concealing even the two arms, a feature seen in some figurines at Seleucia.[1] A typical specimen comes from Patna (ht. 5½"). The complete figure is pressed out of a mould and its ornamental decoration is practically nil. The head with a pointed top-knot of hair is covered by a veil (*odhni*) that conceals the bust, the breasts and the front part completely. The ears have prominent discular rings and the wrists a pair of flowery bangles, the ornaments otherwise being sparse. Only a limited number of specimens are known from remote sites like Mathurā, Ahichchhatrā and Patna.

Like Kosam, Mathurā is another big centre of terracotta finds in the Gangetic Valley. Grey figurines, both male and female, of the pre-Kushāṇa period abound and amongst them is a female type fabricated according to an early "Mother Goddess" tradition.[3] Broadly speaking the Mathurā figurines of this group are distinguished by the following features :

(i) Head pressed out of a mould, the rest of the body made by hand.

(ii) Use of applique decoration.

(iii) Marking of ornaments by means of punched circles.

(iv) Standing pose with sundered dwarfish legs, or sometimes seated clumsily in "European" style with pendant legs.

(v) Eyes of lenticular shape with the pupils indicated, imparting a pronounced lovely character to the face.

The available data do not justify precise identification, but obviously some form of the Great Mother Goddess seems to be indicated. At Ahichchhatrā a couple of similar specimens fragmentary in character were obtained from levels indicating the period c. 200 B. C., the earliest ones coming from the lowest Startum No. VII, datable to 300-200 B. C. The Ahichchhatrā specimens appear to be imports from Mathurā, but unfortunately Mathurā itself does not provide records of systematic excavation that would throw light on the relative age of this important group, although upwards of a thousand specimens have been found at the place. [Figs. 235-6]. We may tentatively place the type as Mauryan, extending also into the Śuṅga period, when a transition from it to the secular figurines took place. Their clay is finely kneaded and fired to stone-like hardness. The colour with few exceptions is grey and it seems that after making the figurines were covered with a thin slip containing flux to produce shining glaze during heating. The black colour is due to the figurines being smoke-fired in closed oven. These features seldom appear after about the first century B. C. Two

1. Van Ingen, *Figurines from Seleucia* (1939), 'Draped Women' Type, pp. 78 ff., pls. VIII-XII.
2. S. Kramrisch, *Journal of India Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. VII, (1939), pl. IX, fig. 5.
3. V. S. Agrawala, 'Mathura Terracottas', *Journal of the U. P. Historical Society*, Vol. IX, Part II (July 1936), pp. 17 ff.

specimens, one (ht. 5″) in the Mathurā Museum and second (6½″) in the Indian Museum illustrate this type. The latter wears a lotus stalk in the ear-lobes with a big flower (*mṛiṇāla-kuṇḍala*), a torque, a short necklace, a pendant necklace passing on the breasts and shoulders, a tight waist-band with hanging fish-symbol, and a double girdle, the upper one decorated with applique *chakra* symbol.

We have also a corresponding male type produced in similar clay and technique, but its faces show foreign ethnic features. A short beard is indicated by indentation marks on a peaked chin, and there is a bicornate turban on the head. The cheek-bones are prominent. In a few cases we see a beard-mask, a conical head-gear, and drapery covering the lower body in the *tahmad*[1] style. These male heads are as numerous as the female figurines ; the male type, however, is confined to Mathurā as of strictly local character, since no specimens have been traced outside that region up to now. [Fig. 237]. It seems that it appeared later than the female type, about first century B.C. The influx of the Kshaharāta Śakas in the population of Mathurā seems to have induced the local potters to copy those faces in clay for the delectation of their clientele. That became a traditional feature of the Indian potter's art in subsequent periods also. A trial dig at Mathurā can alone settle question regarding the relative chronology of these two early types of male and female figurines of the Jamna valley.

A third characteristic early type from Mathurā, linked by its material and manufacturing technique with the above, is represented by a rich group of elephant figurines (5½″ × 9″). [Figs. 238-9]. The type reflects the popular fondness for this animal during the Maurya-Śuṅga epoch, as seen also in the sculpture of Bharhut and Sanchi. The clay elephants are profusely decorated with markings on the body of parallel lines or punched circlets. Their poses are varied, in some running, with a rider on back, and in others trumpeting with an uplifted trunk and wild eyes. Kauṭilya describes *kshurapra-mālā* as an ornament for decorating elephants. As the name *kshurapra* (Hindi *khurpā*) implies, it consisted of celt-like plaques and is actually seen on several of these specimens. A corresponding type also occurs at Ahichchhatrā showing numerous figures of bull, made of grey clay, hand-modelled and with profuse decoration. [Fig. 420]. At Kosam in the Śuṅga period, a distinct group consists of chariots with swiftfooted bulls whose body is beautified with pleasing floral decoration. It appears that each famous centre specialised in local plastic types of its own, and also produced some common types, constituting the general typological repertoire for that period.

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1. V. S. Agrawala, 'Mathura Terracotta', *Journal of the U. P. Historical Society*, Vol. IX, Pt. II (July 1936), pp. 27-28, pl. VI-VII, figs. 16-24.

Thus, there are some well-marked stages in the evolution of the early Indian clay-figurines. Firstly, there is a religious female type with symbols and elements of decoration rooted in the tradition of the Mother Goddess. This was followed by a type drawn entirely from life, portraying figures of charming men and women in poses of dance and movement. The change was due to artistic causes as well as religious changes. Motifs, originally religious, of seated and standing types, were adopted for ordinary figures. The variety in the case of female figurines consists either in her pose or in the object—a fan, a mirror or a flower—held in her hand. Such specimens abound at Mathurā and Kosam. Their facial forms as well as ornaments and drapery are related to well-known types of Śuṅga sculpture. An oft-recurring specimen shows a young woman feeding a parrot or playing with that bird as her favourite pastime[1], of which the Mathurā school of sculpture preserves several beautiful specimens.

In Kuahāṇa art emphasis on sculpture was mounting to the decrease of terracotta art. This is reflected in the comparative paucity of terracotta specimens in this period both at Mathurā and Ahichchhatrā, whereas at Kosam the art of clay-figurines almost died out. Only in a very limited number of specimens the earlier traditions of fine workmanship continued, and the majority of Kushāṇa figurines exhibit a crude style. Attention may be drawn to a charming figure of Kāmadeva standing on the prostrate body of the fisherman Śūrpaka. He holds a sheaf of arrows in right hand and a long bow in left. The story of the princess Kumudavatī falling in love with the unwilling fisherman Śūrpaka and winning his heart through the intervention of the god of love seems to have been a popular one in the Kushāṇa period as Aśvaghosha refers to it both in the *Buddhacharita* (XXX. 11) and the *Saundrananda* (VIII. 44).[2] [Fig. 241].

The loss due to aesthetic decadence was somewhat made up by the emergence of figures of iconographic interest which begin to be made first in the Kushāṇa period ; e.g. Nāgī, Kubera, Hārītī, Vasudhārā, etc. found at Mathurā. [Figs. 242-5]. At Ahichchhatrā the most characteristic Kushāṇa type is that of a nude dwarf (*vāmanaka*) comprising about a hundred specimens and showing a bandy-legged figure with hands on breast or arms akimbo, and standing with knees apart but feet joined. [Fig. 246]. Linked to it were other sub-types and grotesque figures,[3] all of wide distribution from Rājghāt to Mathurā. Shallow votive tanks with crude male figurines and musicians

1. 'Mathura Terracottas', *loc. cit.*, p. 30.

2. I am indebted to the late Dr. Johnston for pointing out to me these references to the Śūrpaka story after this figure of Kāmadeva was published in the *Bibliography of Indian Archaeology*, 1934 (Published 1936), p. 15, pl. IVd.

3. Agrawala, 'Ahichchhatrā Terracottas', *loc. cit.*, pp. 118-29, Nos. 53-78.

playing on drums or cymbals fall within this group of Kushāṇa terracottas. On the literary side these grotesque figures correspond to the *vikaṭa, vāmana, kubjaka, kumbhāṇḍa,* and deformed *gaṇa* types who were regarded as tutelary attendents of Śiva, Gaṇapati, Kārttikeya and Kubera. The figures were given a new interpretation, viz. as auspicious forms of various *nidhis* or treasures, named *kharva, nikharva, mukunda,* etc., all of them being associated with Kubera whose iconography also points to deformed features. According to the Purāṇas[1] they were of many forms (*svarūpa, arūpa, virūpa*) and names, having a great variety of human (*nānāmukha*) and animal faces (*īhāmṛigamukha*), with gaping mouth (*vyādītāsya*), flat faces (*chipiṭānana*) and terrible forms (*karāla*). A strange blending of religious forms made their list very long ; sometimes treating them as benevolent *gaṇas* and at other times as malevolent *asuras*, both of them regarded as subsidiary forms of Śiva depicted in his temple. The reason of the emergence of these *gaṇa* figures in the Kushāṇa period seems to be due to the Śaiva movement under Pāśupata teachers who laid equal emphasis on the worship of *gaṇas* also.

In distant Deccan for the first time do we find clay-figurines cultivated as fine art, as seen in the Sātavāhana specimens (first-second century A. D.) unearthed at Kondāpur, a village of Kalabgur Tehsil in Medak district (Hyderabad, Dn). The figurines are made of *kaolin*, a soft grained clay of white colour. They are usually made hollow pressed out of two or more moulds, subsequently joined and fired. Some of them were painted. The human figures show a large variety, mostly comprising beautiful heads with curly hair or wearing elaborate turban with foliated knots on one side as seen in the Amarāvatī and Nāgarjunikonda sculptures. The female heads are still more charming and varied, revealing a high degree of skill in the making of moulds, a keen sense of realism and artistic effect. Besides human figures, there was also found a considerable group of animal figurines, including lion, bull, horse, ram, dog, parrot, etc.[2] [Figs. 247-8].

With the advent of the Gupta period fresh artistic activity bloomed forth at many centres in North India. Mathurā, Ahichchhatrā, Pawāyā, Śrāvastī, Bhītā, Rājghāt, etc. participated in the revival of terracotta art. The modeller's art received a new status in the Gupta period that it had not known before. Clay-figurines were employed as a popular medium to broadcast the message of art and beautiy to the masses. Such figures were now used equally for religious and secular purposes,

1. Matsya Purāṇa 154. 524-545 ; Vāmana 57. 60-104 ; Harivaṁśa 2. 124. 19-25, 2. 109. 63-84, 3. 32. 5-14, 3. 45. 1-4 ; Vāyu 101. 260-64 ; Brahma 213. 93-99 ; Rām. Kishkindhā 4. 15-21 ; Anuśāsana 14. 140-165.

2. K. M. Ahmad, 'Antiquities and archaeological Remains of Kondapur', pp. 11-12, *Proceedings of the Hyderabad Archaeological and Historical Society* (Special meeting held on the 10th August, 1941).

and served as poorman's sculpture, contributing much to democratise aesthetic culture. Besides smaller figurines, big plaques depicting mythical and religious scenes were fixed as an integral part of brick architecture both in temples and secular buildings. At times, images and plaques were made of considerable size, e.g. the life-size figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, fixed as entrance jambs to the Śiva temple at Ahichchhatrā[1]. Terracotta plaques served like stone slabs to decorate huge dimensions. We find a large group of Gupta brick temples conceived from top to bottom in terms of terracotta friezes and mouldings. A remarkable example is preserved at Bhitargaon in Kanpur district (circa fifth-sixth century A.D.). Of the same period a large brick Stūpa consisting of a series of beautiful mouldings and plaque-friezes, was found at Mirpur Khas in Sind, marking the western-most extension of Gupta sculpture. The Lakshmaṇa temple at Sirpur is a magnificent example of brick architecture with plenty of fine moulded decoration of about the seventh century A. D.

Typologically the Gupta terracottas fall into three classes :

(i) Religious figures depicting Brahmanical gods and goddesses, as Vishṇu, Sūrya, Śiva, Kārttikeya, Pārvatī, Mahiśāsuramardinī, etc. An artistic pair showing heads of Śiva and Pārvatī comes from Ahichchhatrā.

(ii) Figures of fashionable men and women found at the numerous Gupta sites, of which the female heads are charming. Completely pressed out of moulds they represent the best traditions in style associated with Gupta art. They illustrate a pleasing variety of hair styles. In some cases painted lines and colours are preserved on them. Over two thousand specimens may be counted which together visualise to us the charming ideals of feminine beauty embodied in the works of such poets as Kālidāsa and Bāṇa. In them we come face to face with a veritable gallery of human beauty. In coiffure styles there is great similarity amongst figurines of all sites, which is due to their being the products of a common aesthetic culture. The *alakāvalī* style shows hair arranged in frizzled locks on the two sides of a central parting (*keśa-vīthī*). This fashion is often alluded to in Kālidāsa as the mark of a beautiful face. For example, in the *Raghuvaṁśa* (VIII, 53) he speaks of the *alaka* hair of Indumatī twisted in short spirals (*valībhṛitaḥ*). Similarly Yakshiṇī parted from her husband has her *alakas* falling loosely on the shoulders owing to her denying herself the usual make-up. Even the male heads show the *alaka* hair in gorgeous wig-like arrangement. As observed by Sir John Marshall on the basis of Bhita figurines the men who so adorned themselves "must have been foppish to a degree, with their long

1. V. S. Agrawala, 'Terracotta Figurines of Ahichchhatrā ; *Ancient India*, No. 4 (January 1948), p. 138, No. 119, pl. XLIII B.

curls falling loose on one side only, or elaborated like a full Gregorian wig, or coiffure with jewels in the Antoinette style, or disposed more severely in the royal manner of Persia.[1]"

A second style of coiffure shows the hair in the form of peacock's feathers turning at the ends (*līlā-mayūra-barhabhaṅgī keśa-pāśa*) and arranged on the two sides of the central parting[2]. Another style of coiffure in which the hair was arranged in the form of a honey-comb into two cellular masses had its origin in the fashions cultivated by the Parthians. It is said that this beautiful style was patronised even amongst the society women in Rome and thus had obtained international vogue in the ancient fashion world[3].

(iii) The third class of Gupta terracottas, as stated above, consists of decorative panels serving the ends of architecture, The ornamental reliefs show varied subjects, both mythological and decorative. A representative specimen of this class is a large plaque from Ahichchhatrā showing a pair of centaurs (*Kinnara-mithuna*), an ancient motif going back to the pre-Kushāṇa art of Mathurā[4].

Another interesting specimen shows the *Pramathas* or dwarfish attendants of Śiva making a holocaust of Daksha's sacrifice[5].

As in sculpture, so in terracotta, Gupta art had evolved a national style of wide distribution. For instance, the plaque from the Stūpa of Mirpur Khas in Sind shows a standing male figure identical in its modelling and decoration, hair-dressing and drapery, with the figurines of Madhyadeśa or north India. It holds a small lotus flower in right hand and wears a short loincloth with painted stripes.

The clay-figurines of Rājghāt near Banaras exhibited in the Bharat Kala Bhavan are specially attractive. A small plaque showing a girl on the swing under an *aśoka* tree with her scarf fluttering on the sides is a very charming specimen of Gupta art. The subject and the pose recall the swinging lady Irandatī in one of the paintings at Ajanta[6].

1. Sir John Marshall, 'Excavations at Bhita', *A. S. R.*, 1911-12, p. 72.
2. V. S. Agrawala, 'Rajghat Terracottas', *Journal of the U. P. Historical Society*, Vol. XIV (July 1941, P. 3, fig. 1).
3. 'Rājghāt Terracottas', *loc. cit.*, p. 3, fig. 8; 'Ahichchhatrā Terracottas', *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 143, pl. L, figs. 155-56.
4. V. S. Agrawala, 'Terracotta Figurines of Ahichchhatra', *Ancient India*, No.4, pp.170, pl.LXV.
5. *Ibid*, pl. LXI.
6. G. Yazdani, *Ajanta*, Part II, text, p. 44, pl. XLI *a*.

A female head and bust from Rājghāt in typical Gupta style in the Bharat Kala Bhavan shows the original yellow paint still preserved on its surface. After the figurines were fired in the kiln, they were coated with a thin slip of Multānī-*miṭṭī*, which served as the base for the painter painting it with red or yellow colour and marking the ornaments and costume in coloured lines. Several groups of miniature figures of young drummers representing the *mārdaṅgika* type of Bāṇa also come from Rājghāt.

Religious figures at Rajghat are very few ; the best piece amongst them is a singularly majestic head of Śiva (5″ high) showing prominently the crescent, vertical eyes, and matted locks. A lower portion of a four-armed Vishṇu terracotta with short loin-cloth (*jaṅghikā*), *vanamālā*, and the two side emblems, *chakra* and *goda*, is also note worthy.

Amongst the numerous male specimens from Ahichchhatrā, Rājghāt and Bhīṭā, we may identify some as typical of the *grihapatis* or householders, whose skill, resourcefulness and munificence upheld the social and economic structure of Gupta society. A couple of fine specimens are in the Allahabad Municipal Museum.

That the tradition of brick temples and ornamental plaques was once quite flourishing in Bihar is shown by the discovery of a brick-built edifice of stupendous dimensions during the excavations at Nandangarh near Lauria in Champaran district. In its earliest form the structure must have been erected not later than the second century B. C., but the monument continued to flourish with later additions during the Kushāṇa, Gupta and post-Gupta periods. A large number of terracotta heads and busts with staring goat-like eyes, obviously bearing Sassanian and extraneous influences, were discovered here.[1] These figurines partake of a vigorous technique of hand-modelling, closely allied to the type of terracottas from Ghosi in the Azamgarh district of the U. P.[2] Unfortunately no records about their levels are published. Stylistically the figures are datable to about the sixth-seventh century. That this type was once so widely spread in north India points to an influx of foreign peoples, possibly in the trail of the Hūṇas. They constitute valuable evidence of how the Indian modeller were reacting to strange facial types mingling with the indigenous population. Nothing to match with this plastic material is furnished by the sculptural records.

At Paharpur (Rajshahi district), stucco decoration on the wells was being used along with terracotta plaques.[3] This seems to have been the convention of the building

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1936-37, Pl. XXII, figs. 1-12 ; Pl. XXIII, figs. 13-16.

2. V. S. Agrawala, 'Terracottas from Ghosi', *Journal of the U. P. Historical Society*, Vol. X. Part II (July 1937), pp. 59-64, figs.

3. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1927-28, p. 101.

art in the early medieval period as illustrated also at Nalanda. By far the vast majority of finds in the Paharpur excavations were the terracotta plaques that came from the debris of the verandahs of the first and second terraces. No less than 579 complete and fragmentary plaques were discovered during the clearance of the mound. Besides a considerable number were found *in situ*. If arranged in a single row they would cover a distance of over two-thirds of a mile, taking 14" as the average length of a plaque. The terracotta art of Paharpur shows that Bengal was also sharing in that common mass movement for the spread of aesthetic culture through the modeller's art. The Stūpa of Mirpur Khas in Sind, the Suratgarh Fort in Bikaner, the Bhitargaon temple and the Śrāvastī Stūpa of which most of the examples are now deposited in the Lucknow Museum, the Nalanda Stūpa and the Lakshamaṇa temple of Sirpur in C. P., constitute the best monumental remains of this art. As observed by Sri K. N. Dikshit, the use of terracotta plaques as a material for the embellishment of the interior of temples had established itself in Bengal by the late Gupta period. This art had taken root in the soil and was in the hands of more humble artisans than was the art of sculpture. The loss in respect of skill and finish was more than compensated by the delineation of homely subjects of everyday rural and outdoor life, of men and animals, and of stories current in folk-lore. It was truly a folk art vibrating with life and expression. Popular folk tales are represented with the utmost brevity. In single plaques at Paharpur, for expmple, we find the well-known story of the meddlesome monkey coming to grief in pulling out a wedge from a split beam of wood; the story of the haughty lion being conducted by a hare to a well and perishing there; the "Elephant and Mice" story in which the grateful mice releases from captivity a huge elephant by nibbling at the cords of the neck and the legs. The treatment is cryptic, but must have been intelligible even to ordinary people, since the fables behind them were of wide publicity and known even to children. The representation of the typical fauna and flora of Bengal, including the tiger and the leopard, the wild boar and the deer, the elephant and the horse, the jackals and the dogs, the cows and the buffalœs, the ducks and the geese, the peacocks and the parrots, as well as of plants like the palm and the plantain, the *Champaka* and the *Kadamba* are favourite themes of illustration. Specially interesting as depicting the earth-bound sense of the people is the representation of the aboriginal people like the Śabaras in their quaint apparel of leaf aprons and picturesque hunting suite consisting of quivers and bows. Religious subjects also occur prominently amongst the Paharpur finds, e.g. the plaques representing the Buddha in different attitudes, Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, Mañjūśrī holding a book, and also Brahmanical deities like Śiva, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Gaṇeśa are repeated several times. Composite beings, with bird's wings and legs and human

bodies, lion faces and crossed human legs, cobra hoods and human trunks—all these go to make up a picture of a fabulous world which must have appealed strongly to the imagination of Bengal in the sixth-seventh century A. D. By far the most numerous class among plaques represented human beings engaged in various activities of everyday life. Warriors holding sword and shield, musicians playing cymbals, gongs, trumpets or battle-drums, acrobats performing difficult feats of balancing, ascetics seated in meditation or reduced to skeleton, are some of the more noteworthy subjects which make the terracotta art of Paharpur one of the most fascinating and picturesque ever found in this country,

At Mahāsthāna (Bogra district) some beautiful terracotta plaques, toy figurines, animals and ornamental bricks associated with the late Gupta art were found. A remarkable find was fragmentary pot-sherd[1] bearing in low relief a scene in which a man riding in a chariot drawn by four horses is depicted as discharging an arrow at a herd of deer and a centaur, which recalls to mind the well-known Śakuntalā plaque from Bhita.[2]

This earth-bound-art retained its vitality and continued to inspire the modellers of later days. This is best illustrated in the massive brick temple at Mathurāpur in Faridpur district in lower Bengal, where the *deul* rising to a height of 70 ft. with a diameter of 12½ ft. at the base shows a high *śikhara* consisting of successive tiers of projecting mouldings alternating with recessed friezes, the latter decorated in a most sumptuous and attractive manner with continuous horizontal plaques showing rural scenes, *kīrtimukhas*, leographs and a number of mythological scenes from the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, as well as floral and geometrical patterns. The carvings reflect great credit on the artists and the reliefs assignable to about the sixteenth century are most lively and vigorous.[3] The tradition is further illustrated by the very fascinating, richly adorned and symmetrical brick temple at Handial in Pabna district in South Bengal.[4] This temple of the *banglā* or curved-cornice type in spite of its comparatively recent date (end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century) is a gem of architecture, bearing testimony to the genius of the local modellers for their complete mastery in the handling of brick and clay material. The carved panels depict scenes of fighting and mythological stories, royal processions, real and fabulous animals, floral tracery and fret patterns, all combined to form one of the most exquisite temple façades existing in India.

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1928-29, p. 96, pl. XLII (b).
2. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1911-12, pl. XXIV.
3. *A.S.I., A. R.*, 1930-34, p. 130, pl. LXIV (b).
4. Curved cornice temple at Handial, *A. S.I. A. R.*, p. 130, pl. LXIV (a).

The brick temple at Deuliya in Burdwan district stands with a curvilinear *śikhara* divided into ridges and surmounted by an *āmalaka* and profusely decorated with scroll-work and chaitya-window pattern.[1]

The technique of building vertical columns, horizontal mouldings and friezes was rendered extremely simple with the help of a variety of ornamental bricks bearing different designs such as chevron, chess-board, cross-petal or four-petalled flower, dentil, inverted pyramids, windows, corbelled arches and flowers like the sun-flower, lotus add lily[2]. Plaques with human figures were made to alternate with moulded bricks in different patterns producing an extremely pleasing effect, which could not be excelled even in stone reliefs or statuettes.

The religious revival of the sixteenth century under the genius of Chaitanya and his disciples gave great inspiration to the plastic art of the people in addition to that of the wooden figures and paintings on paper and cloth. A plaque from Naladaṅgā in Bengal shows Kṛishṇa standing in the graceful *tribhaṅga* pose with crossed legs, playing his flute and attended by a smaller haloed figure with a purse-like object. This group compares favourably with some of the best of the older specimens of Paharpur.

The raising of the toll-tax (*Dānalīlā*) is shown in a plaque from Vikrampur, depicting the male and female figures in tense action appropriate to the occasion. Another plaque shows a woman standing under a *maṇḍapa* decorated on the top with a parrot and a goose, and fondling a stag.

An effective scene of about the sixteenth century represents Sītā in the *aśoka* grove with a female drummer fallen asleep, and Hanumān bending down from the top of the tree to deliver a ring in Sītā's hands. The plaque moulded according to the best traditions of late Bengal art (sixteenth century) is marked by classical realism and brevity of statement.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Portuguese soldiers began to penetrate in the interior of Bengal. The local potters portrayed them in clay. The newcomers were ease-loving in their habits and sometimes wanton, given to a life of drunkenness and *shikār*. Two plaques from Jessore depict scenes of revelry and hunting. One of them shows a Portuguese soldier on horseback followed by a foot-soldier carrying shield and sword with a hound running by the side of the horse. The rider is wearing a hat, a tunic, full-boots, and trousers and carries a sword and a shield. With his left hand he holds the reins of the horse and in his right hand a whip. The second plaque shows a Portuguese General seated on an easy-chair and drinking from

1. *A. S. I. A. R.* 1934-35, p.43, pl. XIX(a.
2. *A. S. I., A. R.* 1936-37, p. 53.

an inverted wine jug directed toward his mouth. In front of him are two soldiers, one of them holding a drinking cup.

Thus the art of Indian clay-figurines is of respectable antiquity and illustrated by a mass of material of much historical and cultural value. The varied life of the people through the ages was documented in this medium. The art developed close to the soil and served as a popular means of diversion and decoration. By its easy availability and low price, by the pliability of its material, and the ease with which a number of specimens could be produced from a single mould, this art held the affection of the people far more than twenty centuries, and may be expected to play a role of even greater importance in the future renaissance of Indian art.

APPENDIX I

SYMBOLS AND ICONS IN CLASSICAL ART & RELIGION

Indian art from the earliest times had been evolved on the basis that it is of auspicious character (*bhadrakṛit*). All the gods invested with the heavenly powers and the material forms created in nature are repeatedly mentioned in Vedic literature. They are of benevolent form for man (*bhadrāṇi*), and whatever turns amiss becomes *abhadra*. Many such auspicious forms filled the life of the Vedic people between earth and heaven. It is said that the gods born from the womb of Mother Aditi were a team of auspicious and immortal brothers (*taṁ devā anvajāyanta bhadrā amṛitabhandhavaḥ*, RV. 10.72.5). The most typical auspicious symbol evolved in Vedic times was the *Pūrṇa-Kalaśa* (RV. 3. 32. 15) and it is stated that in each home the artistic form of a women bearing the full vase (*pūrṇakumbhanārī*) was installed (AV. 3.12.8). In the RV. itself the parallel word *maṅgala* came into existence and a young bride loaded with manifold blessings was called *sumaṅgalī vadhū*. In the very first hymn of the RV. the truth of Agni's nature is stated to confer auspiciousness upon one who invokes him. Of all the auspicious signs which became universal for all occasion, the archetypal mark was *svastika*, a solar symbol, since in the sun all the good things of life were believed to exist. Many a term expressing these beautiful objects begin with the prefix *su*, e.g. *sudṛiśīka* (of handsome form), *supratīka* (of beautiful face), *sudraviṇa* (of good wealth), *suohadra* (of goodly nature), *sudevatā* (benign godhead), *suchakra* (perfect wheel), *suvijñāna* (good mind), *surūpakṛitnu* (fashioner of beautiful forms), and so many others. Gradually the number of such auspicious forms, both concrete and abstract, was much expanded, and a collective offering was made to them (*maṅgalikebhyaḥ svāhā*, AV. 19. 23 28).

The auspicious symbols as part of religious thought and ritualistic signs penetrated all walks of society, and took such deep roots as to have survived through the ages up to our own times. They were accepted amongst all denominations, viz. Buddhist, Jaina and Brāhmaṇas. In fact, no religious ownership should be claimed for them but a universal cult was taken for granted as their basis. They were freely admitted in the decoration of the Stūpa as *Pūrṇaghaṭapaṁkti*, *Chakrapaṁkti*, Lotus-garland, etc. (see pp. 125-6); in civic architecture, e.g. five defencive circles (*pañcharakshā*) round a city, viz. Nāga kings half-emerging from ponds (*udakaniśrita nāga*), cup-bearing deities (*karoṭapāṇi deva*), garland-bearing gods (*mālādhara deva*), merry-making godlings (*sadāmattaka deva*) and four lokapāla guardian kings (*chatvāraḥ mahārājānaḥ*) (Divyā-

vadāna, p. 218); and in domestic architecture as conch, lotus, full-vase, etc. An unlimited and manisided elaboration of the earliest symbols took place in course of time as we see a full stock of over five hundred symbols on punchmarked coins (c. 700 B. C.-100 B.C.). The tradition was still further developed on tribal coins (c. 200 B.C.-c. 200 A. D.) and on clay sealings (c. 200 A.D.-500 A.D.). The evolution of religious forms in the iconography of gods and goddesses required a twofold effort, viz. a stock taking of the traditional symbols and their assimilation in the various divine images that were being produced from about the first century A. D. in the beginning of the Kushāṇa period under the stress of the Bhakti movement. The Harivaṁśa Purāṇa (2.109.95-103) enlists hundred and eight such symbols (*Maṅgalāshṭaśatam*) although the actual names are somewhat less.

The number was variable as in the two necklaces carved on the Sanchi Stūpa. By the first century A. D. the list had been standardised to a selection of eight, known as *ashṭamaṅgalaka*, as depicted on the Jaina Āyāgapaṭas of Mathura. This list was far flung in place and time since the word *aṭṭhamaṅgala* occurs in the Mahāvaṁsa (30.65), Aṅgavijjā and Harshacharita.

The stock of ancient symbols which now filled the picture and which naturally entered the iconographic formulas may be shortly stated as follows :

Animal and Reptile :

matsya (fish), kūrma (tortoise), varāha (boar), makara (crocodile), lizard, mṛiga (deer), siṁha (lion), aśva (horse), hastin (elephant), go (cow or bull), nāga (serpent), aja (goat), nakula (mangoose), śvā (dog), etc., grotesque creatures with composite limbs, etc.

Bird :

Garuḍa, haṁsa, sārasa (crane), śyena, etc.

Human :

muni (ascetic), ashṭakanyās (eight maidens), ashṭadikkumārikās (eight maidens of space), chakravartin (sovereign monarch), seven sisters, nara, śiśu (child),

Semi-divine (Devayonis) :

Nāga, Yaksha, Vidyādhara, Gandharva, Kinnara, Suparṇa, Kumbhāṇḍa, Lokapāla gods, Apsarasas, nymphs and dryads, chātummahārājika devas,

Floral :

tree, kalpavṛiksha, kalpalatā, padma (lotus), pipal, vaṭa, (also other seven various trees of the Buddhas), mālā (garland, vanamālā, kiṅjalkinīmālā, vaijayantī-mālā, etc.), muchakunda (so-called honey-suckle), tāla (palm), many other floral designs and patterns.

Inanimate Objects :

pātra (bowl, cf. pātrīdharā or karoṭapāṇi deva), maṇi (semi-precious gem), bhadramaṇi (auspicious gem), kaustubha etc. maṇis, śaṅkha (conch-shell), muktā (pearl), ashṭanidhi mālā (including padma, śaṅkha, kharva, nikharva, etc.), kaṇṭhā (torque), hāra (necklace), chhatra (umbrella), nakula (purse), ratha (chariot), vimāna (divine car), cart, rock-mountain, river, etc., vāruṇi, ghaṭa (jar), pūrṇaghaṭa (brimming jar), kārshāpaṇa (coin), mekhalā (girdle), chāmara (flywhisk), ādarśa (mirror), yūpa (stake), sthūṇārāja (great pillar), Stūpa, mansion, kuṭī or parṇaśālā kapiśīrshaka (battlement), vishāṇa (horn), jewels, mukuṭa (crown), chaṅgerī (basket), vīṇā (flute), vaṁśī (lute), mṛidaṅga, cymbals, devavādya, etc.

Weapons :

triśūla, śūla (spear), vajra, chakra or rathāṅga, (wheel), dhanusha (bow), bāṇa (arrow), hala (ploughshare), musala (pestle), gadā (mace), khaḍga (sword), khaṭvāṅga, charma (shield), kavacha (coat of mail), etc.

Abstract designs and symbols :

svastika, śrīvatsa, śrīchakra, śrīvṛiksha, triratna, nandipada, chakra, pañjaka (five-fingers with palm), etc.

There was much elasticity in grouping these symbols and freedom to incorporate them into iconographic forms as desired. Thus it became possible to formulate a large number of images by the different religionists and then to start a new chain of their glorification. The symbols assumed a fresh exalted position in association with the different deities and they did not suffer any abatement either of meaning or high rank enjoyed by them for many centuries. For example, Suparṇa became the Garuḍa of Vishṇu ; Chakra the Dharmachakra of Buddha and Mahāvīra and Sudarśana Chakra of Vishṇu ; Vṛitra the serpent of Indra as the serpent in connection with the life-stories of Buddha, Mahāvīra, Śiva and Vishṇu.

An analysis of the dispersal and assimilation of these ancient symbols holds the key to the understanding of Indian art forms as they had been handed down from the past, as they became absorbed in the statuary and architecture of the future. The handling of symbols from these two points of view was a very subtle and universal movement which was quietly perfected in accord and harmony which is unparalled in the art history of the world. The Kushāṇa and Gupta period is like a threshold from which one can look before and after and the full meaning of Indian art cannot be perceived without a close attension to the individual history of each symbol with which the art of the age is so profusely saturated. We may visualise this as a great experiment in the assimilation of diverse art

forms or a vast crusible in which the whole people filled their offering with a optimum feeling of life's full assembly.

Let us pursue these forms more closely :

Śrī-Lakshmī—An ancient goddess referred to in the Yajurveda as the two consorts of Vishṇu ; of universal adoration as shown in the Śrī-Sūkta ; standing midst lotuses, bathed by two elephants with inverted jars, under the new name of Gaja-Lakshmī in this form her image assimilated the symbolism of lotus, elephants, pūrṇa-ghaṭa, golden necklace (hemamālā) ; perfected as the genius of fertility and abundance; the pose of the Earth Goddess as on a golden leaf from Lauria Nandangarh was transferred to Lakshmī in some examples ; she became the prototype of mother goddess with a child as in the painted example from Dandan Ulique ; she became the goddess *par excellence* being depicted on the reverse of the gold coins of the Guptas and Gāṅgeya-deva ; she was also conceived as the ocean-born maiden of fleet nature who makes herself manifest in the fluctuating fortunes of persons ; in her form of Padminī she became the mistress of the eight treasures (*ashṭaṇidhi*), viz. Padma, Mahāpadma, Makara, Kachchhapa, Mukunda, Nanda, Nīla, Śaṅkha ; of these Padma and Mahāpadma symbolise gold and precious gems respectively ; [Makara was the symbol of Varuṇa's ocean, a very popular motif of early Indian art and representing water cosmology ; its gaping mouth was the source of many kinds of meandering lotus creepers and rising lotus rhizomes and Yakshas and Yakshīs are shown struggling to extract jewels from its teeth ; firstly the Makara was identified with a particular kind of treasure obtained by trade in arms and weapons and then for the future as the vehicle of Varuṇa, king of the Asuras, and thirdly as the auspicious animal of the River Gaṅgā. It may be noted that as an auspicious creature the Makara was placed in Śuṅga and early Kushāṇa period on the beams of the *toraṇa* gateways, a recurrent feature at Bharhut and Mathura ; the motif being mentioned as Śiṅśumāraśiraḥ in the Ādiparva. It is also the decorative spout on numerous examples of Kushāṇa and Gupta pottery and also a beautiful decorative sign of the forehead ornament (*sīmantamakarikā*) ; etc. The tortoise, a Vedic symbol mentioned as Kūrma which symbolised the two inverted shells of earth and heaven. It was then made a part of Lakshmī's icodography as shown in a figure at Sanchi, and lastly made the vehicle of the River Goddess Yamunā. The exact nature of Mukunda nidhi is not certain, but probably it denoted a hermaphrodite (*varshadhara*). Its owner devotes himself to music and dance, acts like a Gandharva or Apasaras. In art many dancing figures conform to this description, specially the Vīṇāvidyādharas which were evolved as figures serving new functions in the iconography of Mahāpurushas. The exact meaning of the term Vidyādhara has not been explained but seems that the term *vidyā* referred to these various sciences of dance,

music and other allied subjects related to śṛiṅgāra and prasādhaṇa, represented with garlands by which they were known as mālāvidyādhara, gems and beads by which they were named gulikāvidyādhara. Another treasure is named Nanda Nidhi, probably related to the Nandipada symbol which continued to be depicted on the pedestals of images and stamped on pottery. The Nīla treasure may be identified with the nīlotpala, blue lotus, which is a constant element of the nature of lotus design both as a flower or a creeper. The Śaṅkha is depicted in early art of Bharhut and Mathura as auspicious symbol of Kubera oozing coins from its mouth. Its association with the Kalpavṛiksha was early recognised. Later on it was counted as one of the Eight Nidhis of Lakshmī, and finally assimilated in the iconography of Vishṇu as one of his four attributes.]

Another elastic symbol was the Śrīvatsa, literally 'Darling Babe of Śrī;' as a mother goddess Śrī often carried in her arms a babe of conventionalised form with a squat torso, short neck and undigitated arms and legs, being a crude representation of a child. This became part of the *aṭṭhamaṅgala* signs and in Jaina iconography found an invariable place on the chest of the Arhats. Later on with Vishṇu.

We may also note the sacred sign of Śrīvṛiksha, 'Tree of Goddess Śrī' which is the Indian tree-of-life and like the same motif in Iran and Assyria was formed by a series of superimposed repeat designs. This is referred to by Varāhamihira as a decoration on one of the bands of a doorway, and actually represented on both Brāhmanical and Buddhist shrine-doors of the Gupta period and also on the door-jambs of the Kushāṇa relief. It appears that the artists were in search of new contexts for these symbols in order to attain fresh meanings and forms of beauty.

At one time Lakshmī and Padminī were regarded as two separate goddesses, as shown by their separate mention in the Purusha-Sūkta of the Yajurveda, and also in a passage of the Sundarakāṇḍa (*babhūva devī cha kṛitā suhastā lakshmīstathā padmini padmahastā*). She was separately known as Padmāśrī in both the epics (*evaṁ te bhāsamānyasya padmāśrī rupatishthaṭām*, Ayodhyā, 79. 15; *abhajat padmarūpāśrī svayameva śarīriṇī*, Mbh. 3. 229. 3), or merely as Śrī. But there was great elasticity in her cult. She is reckoned as consort of Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu, and also Kubera. In the later case, she is represented in several Mathurā statuettes with Bhadrā and Hārītī. Śrī-Lakshmī, Bhadrā and Shashṭhī were present in the Brāhmī Sabhā (Sabhā., 11. 40). Out of this amalgam Śrī-Lakshmī emerged as supreme over all whose worship was far spread. Her figure is said to be carved as an auspicious motif in Rāvaṇa's palace in Laṅkā.

With the cult of Padmāśrī was associated the ancient Taḍāga Mahā, i.e. the Worship of the Lotus-pond, Padmavana (Nalinī, Pushkariṇī) in which Lakshmī was

said to have her abode with her gamboling elephants. The cult of the lotus itself was elaborated in several forms having close links with Lakshmī, e.g. in the Padmavaravedikā, the lotus-decorated railing round Stūpas, Padmamālā, the heavy lotus garland comprising one thousand flowers offered to a Stūpa or Deity. The motif of the Puṇḍarīka-kīḍā became popular as part of water sports. (*Ante*, pp. 47, 81-2, 135, 184, 259-60).

BALARĀMA—Various elements of his iconography consisted of a canopy of serpent hoods taken from the Nāga cult, a long plough from the religious form of the Kshetrapāla gods, a stout club from the Yaksha iconography (cf. Moggarapāṇi Yaksha); seen in a Śuṅga image from village Junsuti of Mathura. In some cases the plough is surmounted by a tailed loin (Siṁhalāṅgūla), a motif described in the Mbh. as an independent emblem of an epic hero, but here fused in the general iconography of Saṅkarshaṇa.

The tradition of Bacchanalian gods also entered into the iconography of Balarāma. Thus the mingling of these several strands became concrete in the form of a new image in the Hindu pantheon. His progressive absorption in the Vaishṇava pantheon is indicated by the big Vanamālā garland of lotus flowers adorning his figure in Gupta art.

VISHṆU—In the iconographic reorganisation of the auspicious signs and symbols the figure of Vishṇu was the earliest to be evolved and a focal one towards which everything seemed to flow to take its proper place. Vishṇu was said to have a universal form measuring earth and heaven with all the gods and Ṛishis worshipping him; then a human form with four or eight hands.

Śaṅkha + Padma + Chakra + Gaḍā + Garuḍa + Lakshmī + Śrīvatsa Vanamālā + Cosmic Serpent + Ocean.

Vishṇu was regarded as the Yaksha of Dvārakā by the Buddhists and the club in his hand was indicative of Yaksha's strength as in case of Balarāma. There is a repeated reference to the mighty strength of Vishṇu (*Nārāyaṇa-sthāma*) even in Buddhist literature. The ancient Suparṇa cult became merged in the affiliation of Garuḍa with Vishṇu. We find legendary reference to one Suparṇa, two Suparṇas, three Supaṇas and many Suparṇas in the Vedas all of which became absorbed in the new legend of Garuḍa, king of all the bird kingdom, and the loyal servant of Vishṇu. The new Garuḍa is credited with the bringing of immortal Soma from heaven and identified with the Chhanda or Cosmic Rhythm described as Chhandomaya Garuḍa. This accorded well with the three steps of Vishṇu and the three metres making up the rhythm. The old rivalry of Garuḍa with the Nāgas as stated in the Brahmanical legend of Kadrū and Suparṇī, or Kādrveyas and Sauparṇeyas,

became absorbed in the iconography of Garuḍa- We find several sculptures showing the Mighty Bird grappling with his adversary the Nāga king as shown in Mathura and Gandhara sculptures (Vogel, *Serpent Lore*, pl. XV).

The iconography of Vishṇu also depended on several other ancient symbols like those of the fish, tortoise, boar, lion and Vāmana, all of which were woven in the garland of his serial manifestations.

The form of Vishṇu sleeping on the cosmic serpent Śesha in the ocean was a new conception mingling serveral old and new forms. On the one hand the Vedic idea of the primeval Ocean (Āpaḥ-Samudram-Salilam) and the popular folk-cult of Samudra worship (Sāgaramaha) were there; secondly the idea of a cosmic serpent with its beginning in the Ahi-Vṛitra or Ahir-budhnya, Dragon of the Deep, was now conceived as Ananta which was a stripe of Nāga mythology. Thirdly, goddess Lakshmī, daughter of the ocean became consort of Vishnu present with Nārāyaṇa in his oceanic abode. Fourthly, the milky ocean, which was the source of the auspicious jewels, was conceived of as the watery abode of Nārāyaṇa in his Śeshaśāyī form; fifthly, the cult of lotus springing from his navel, and of Brahmā as the ancient Prajāpati Creator seated on the cosmic lotus (Bhūpadma). These were the several important elements that intered into the making of this aspect of Vishṇu's iconography. The Vanamālā and the Kirīṭa which was the prototype of the Buddhist Chūḍā, also formed distinctive symbols of Vishṇu's form in contrast to the matted locks of Brahmā and Śiva.

Śiva—The iconography of Śiva comprising various symbolical and mythical elements is seen in the following features :

The Kailāsa mountain representing the conception of Sumeru, the Mountain of Gold from which the world rivers take their flow and which was the abode of Devas, became the residence of Śiva as the god of the mountain (Giriśanta Deva); +snakes, taking the various aspects of Nāga iconography, which are now twisted in his matted locks and limbs of the body; +moon, an ancient cult (Chandramaha) now worshipped as the dizit on Śiva's head and also representing of tradition of Vedic Soma, the power of immortality and refregeration; + Gaṅgā, river of the immortal heaven flowing as the symbol of the eternal life impulse (Prāṇa) and movement (Gati) which inhabits the forest of Śiva's matted locks; + the Nandī Bull, a prominent member of the cult of the four animals, making Śiva's vehicle standing as the symbol of Kāma vanquished by him ; + Triśūla, another version of Indra's Vajra and standing for the three cities and three Guṇas.

Ambikā, taken from the cult of the Mother Goddess. Vaiśravaṇa, the king of the Yakshas conceived as a friend of Śiva. Gaṇas, who were forms of so many Yakshas

and Grahas, Asuras and Raksharas ; all of whom were reckoned among Śivas's hosts. Skanda and Gaṇeśa as the leaders of the Gaṇas.

Śiva also represented the tradition of the ancient naked ascetics (vātaraśanā yatis) and the Mahānagna Purusha of Vedic folklore. And the Yogī in whom all the elements of a stern spiritual discipline found their fulfilment. He has two aspects, firstly as Sthāṇu, fixed and changeless, and secondly as Naṭarāja the Great Dancer who exemplifies the world rhythm in the movements of his dance. In the Vedas Indra is called Nṛitu and Girvaṇa and both these epithets apply to Śiva as Naṭarāja and the arch-teacher of music and sciences.

TĪRTHAṄKARA—Siṁhāsana + Yogī with Padmāsana and Dhyānamudrā + Kāyotsargamudrā + Nāsāgradṛishṭi + Naked body + Śrīvatsa + Nāga hoods (of the Twentythird Pārśvanātha and the Seventh Tīrthāṅkara Supārśvanātha) + Chakra on Pillar (on pedestal of the image) + Triratna + Pārśvachara + Chāmragrāhī + Stūpa worship + Mahāpurusha Lakshaṇa + Ashṭamāṅgalika chihnas.

Lañchchhanas of the different Tīrthaṅkaras were conspicuous by absence in the Kushāṇa period but later on were gradually taken from the ancient stock of auspicious animal, floral and abstract symbols. The Yaksha cult also was adopted as an essential element and a particular Yaksha-Yakshī pair was assigned to each Tīrthaṅkara.

These discreet elements formed the complete iconographic image which was not so much a human form as a negation of it by introducing so many super-human and divine elements in the conception of the Tīrthaṅkara and this was equally applicable to the form of the Buddha who was made a Lokottara Purusha.

BUDDHA—The Buddha image was the outcome of integrating discreet elements, of Yaksha-Nāga, Chakravartī and Yogī iconography, many of which were taken from the prevailing stock of symbols and myths.

Yogī	*Chakravartī*
Padmāsana	Siṁhāsana.
Nāsāgradṛishṭi	
Kaparda	
Ushṇīsha Ūrṇā, etc.	32 Mahāpurusha lakshaṇas.
Saṁghāṭī Bhikshāpatra	Royal drapery and ornaments (as in Bodhisattva images).
Pushpavṛishṭi and Gandharvas etc.	Chāmaragrāhī and Pārśvachara.
Pārshvachara Devas	

Chhāya or Prabhāmaṇḍala (taken from Iranian Hvarr)

Chhatra.

Dharmachakra

Monarch's Wheel.

Bodhivṛiksha
Lion—Śākya-Siṁha
Chakra,
Triratna or other symbols on throne or pillar or pedestal.
Mudrās—Saṁbodhi or Dhyāna,
Varada,
Abhaya,
Bhūmisparśa,
Dharmachakra-pravartana or
Vyakhyāna-mudrā

BRAHMĀ—The first images of Brahmā were formed in the Kushāṇa period with the grouping together of several elements:

Four faces + Ṛishi with the knowledge of the Vedas + Prajāpati + Pot-belly from Kumbhodara Yakshas + Yajña (Sruk and Sruvā) + Lotus + Haṁsa + Mānasarovara + Nectar flask (*Amṛita-kamaṇḍalu*) + Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī or Śatarūpā (all being forms of Vedic Aditi).

The ancient cult of the four quarters (*Diśāvrata*) was made concrete in the four faces of Brahmā. He became the type of Agni-Prajāpati for whom the fire-altar was built exemplified as Yajña with its laddles (*sruk-sruvā*) over which Brahmā presided as the superintending priest assimilating himself in his office the functions of all other priests and the Vedas. He was given the form of a Brāhmanic ascetic from which were derived his matted locks, sacred-thread of black antelope-skin, and cross-legged seat. The pot-bellied feature was taken from the iconography of Yakshas named *Brahman*, which term also signified Brahmā. The lake Mānasarovara symbolised the primeval waters of creation known as Āpaḥ or Salilam, and the Golden Haṁsa floating in that lake the original form of Indra, friend of the pregnant cosmic waters.[1] The water-pot of Brahmā which is filled with the waters of creativity was taken from the cult of *chamasa*, the bowl, worshipped as the Full Jar and Auspicious Pot, and represented severally in Kushāṇa art in the form of big stone bowls, nectar flask and Pūrṇaghaṭa.

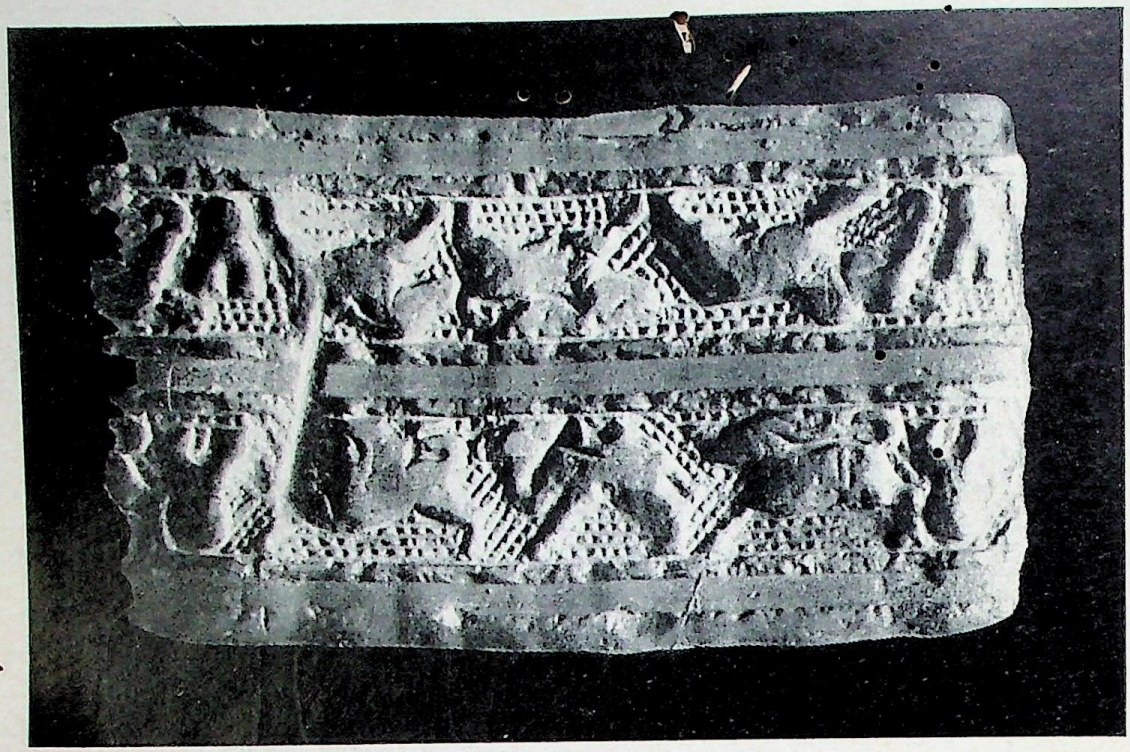
1. *Bibhatsūnāṁ sayujaṁ haṁsamāhurapāṁ divyānāṁ sakhye charantam* / RV. 10. 124. 9.

SŪRYA—It is seen in a twofold form, the earlier of Śunga period on the Bodhgaya railing with the Indian deity driving in a chariot of four-horses representing the four regions of space. In the Kushāṇa period appears a new form of Sūrya wearing northern dress, attended by Daṇḍa and Piṅgala, Rājñī and Nikshubhā, Ushā and Pratyūshā, holding a dagger or lotuses and riding in a chariot driven by Aruṇa and drawn by two or four horses whose number finally became seven. His worship as Mitra was spread from India up to Sasanian Iran. The full-blown lotuses became a prominent symbol of Sūrya together with a coat of mail. We know from the list of ancient obscure religions cults that there was a special cult of Sūrya under the name of Sūrya Maha together with that of Chandra Maha ; the latter playing only a secondry role in iconography, being once depicted in a Mathura terracotta and carved in a bas-relief from Garhwa.

VAIŚRAVAṆA KUBERA—The AV. (8.10) clearly refers to a cult of Four Lokapāla gods represented frequently on the Toraṇa-gateways of the Stūpas. Amongst them one is Vaiśravaṇa Kubera popular amongst the common folk (*Itarajana*). The cult of the Four Mahārāja gods was universally accepted in all religions. But from the point of view of iconography Kubera received the greatest attention. The formula comprised deformed-pot-bellied-corpulent body, mongoose or purse in hand, rich ornaments, smiling face and an open admittance to Yaksha, Gaṇa and Pramatha figures of whatever nature and description into his hosts of attendants. They are generally depicted as *kiṅkara* or atlantes bearing his aerial car and depeted in this position in western Indian cave sculptures and in the Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi.

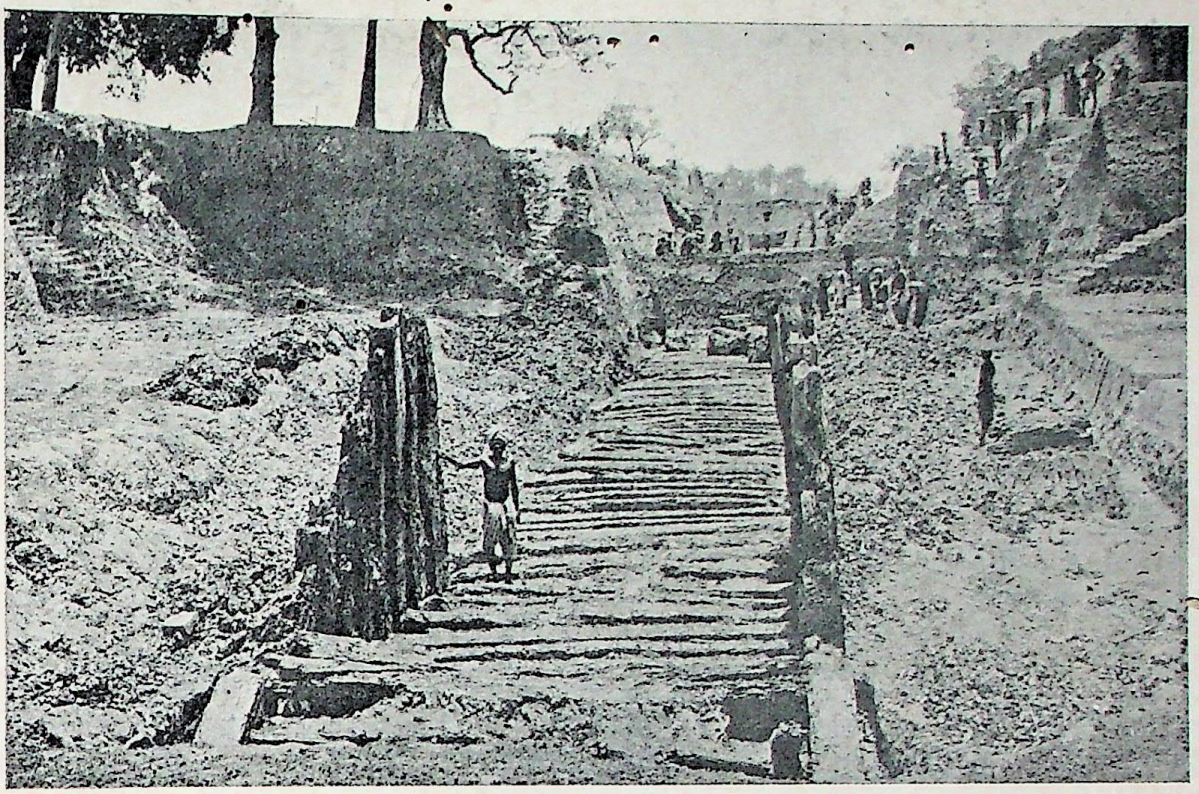
Sometimes later his images were transformed into those of an ideal god of wealth shown more or less as a rich merchant prince of beautiful countenance concieved progressively with greater dignity in the Buddhists temples and paintings. The religious cult of Bacchus with drinking cup and of the goddesses Bhadrā, Lakshmī and Hārītī became a part of Kubera cult.

The conception of Alakā was an inalianable part of the Kubera cult derived from the more ancient tradition of Uttarakuru. Alakā had the ideal Vaibhrāi Garden of Kubera and the oth-



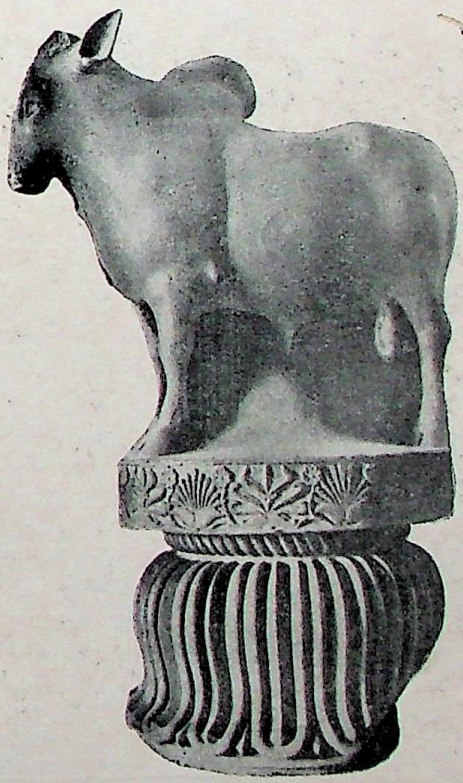
L. Barrel-shaped ring-stone. Negative. Rajghat.

LI. Same. Positive.



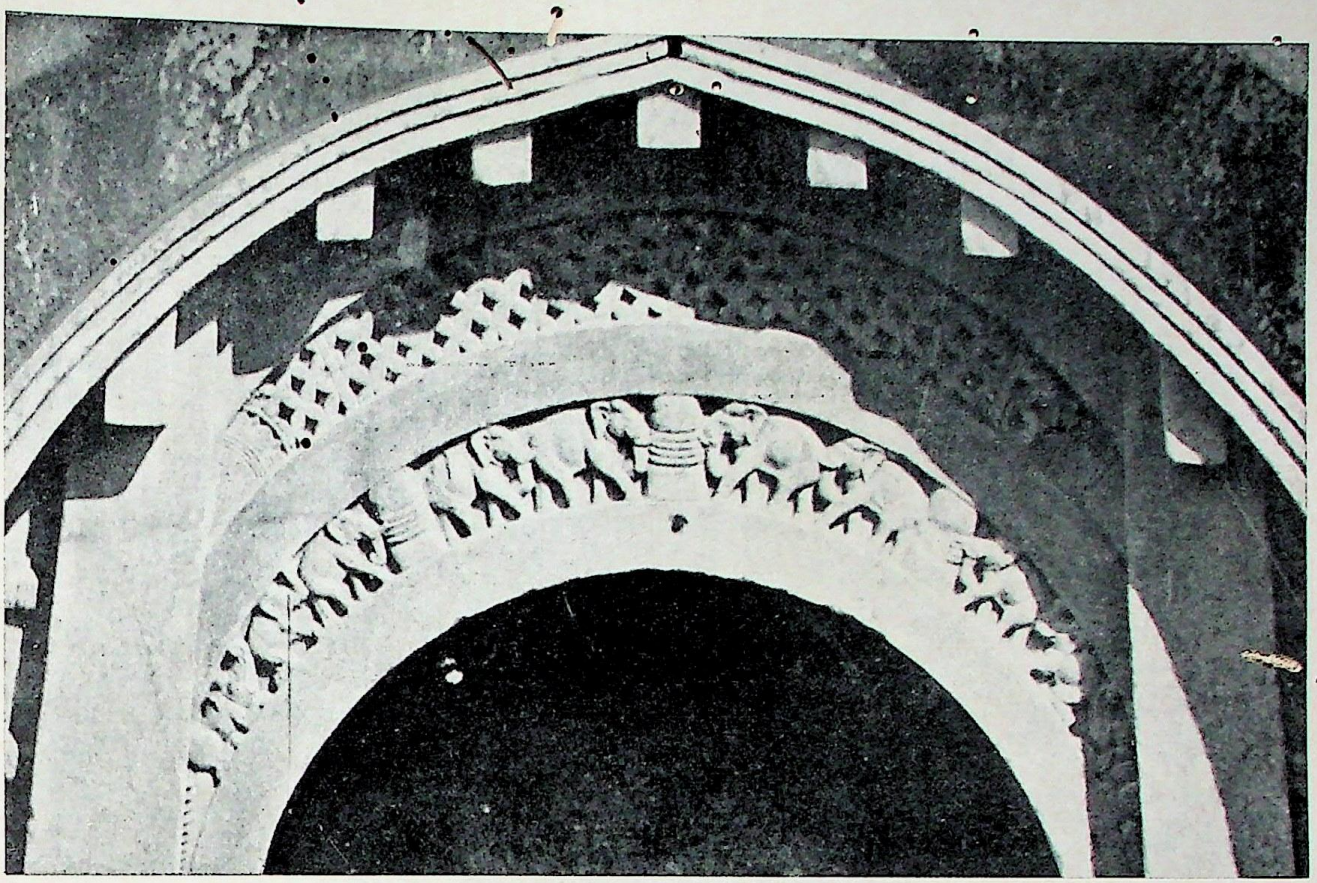
LII. Wooden Palisade. Bulandibagh.

LIII.

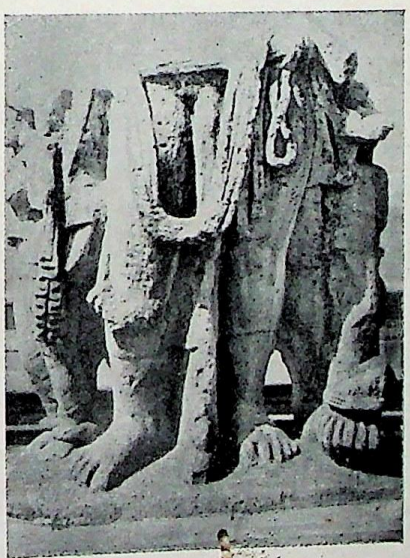


LIV.

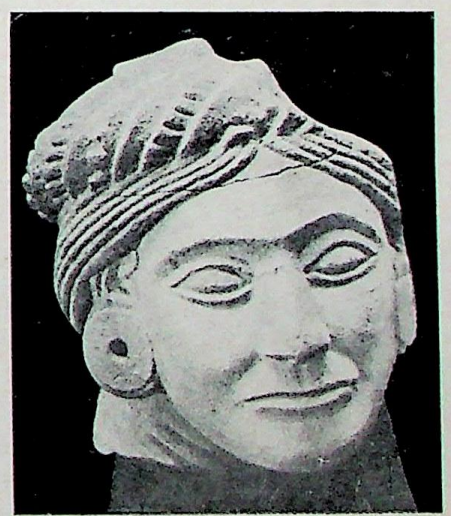
LV. Lion Capital. Sarnath.



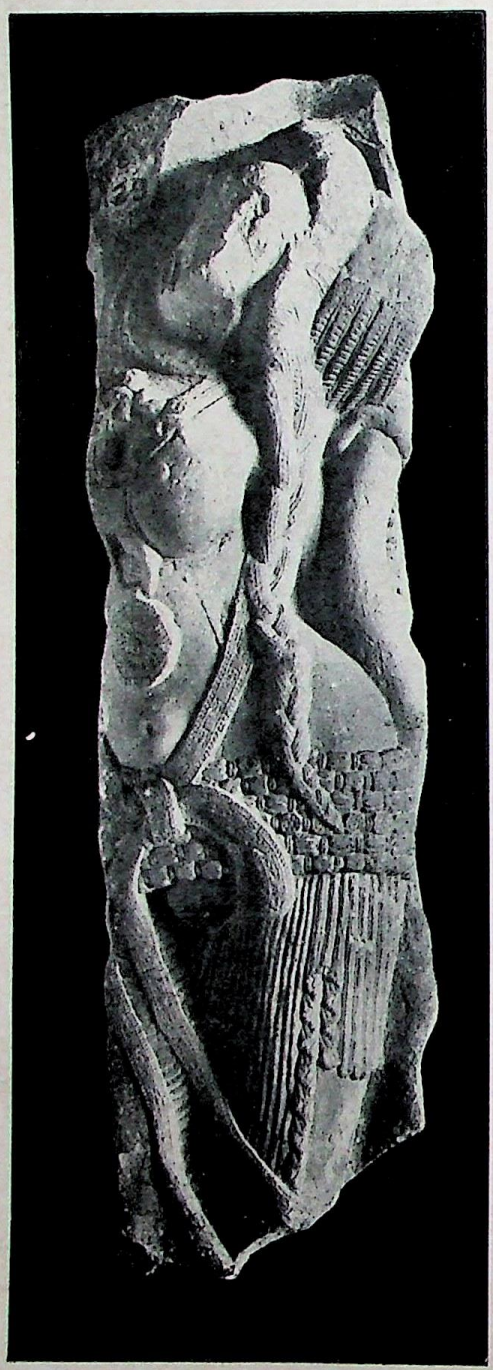
LVI. Close-up of the Facade. Lomas Rishi Cave.



LVII.

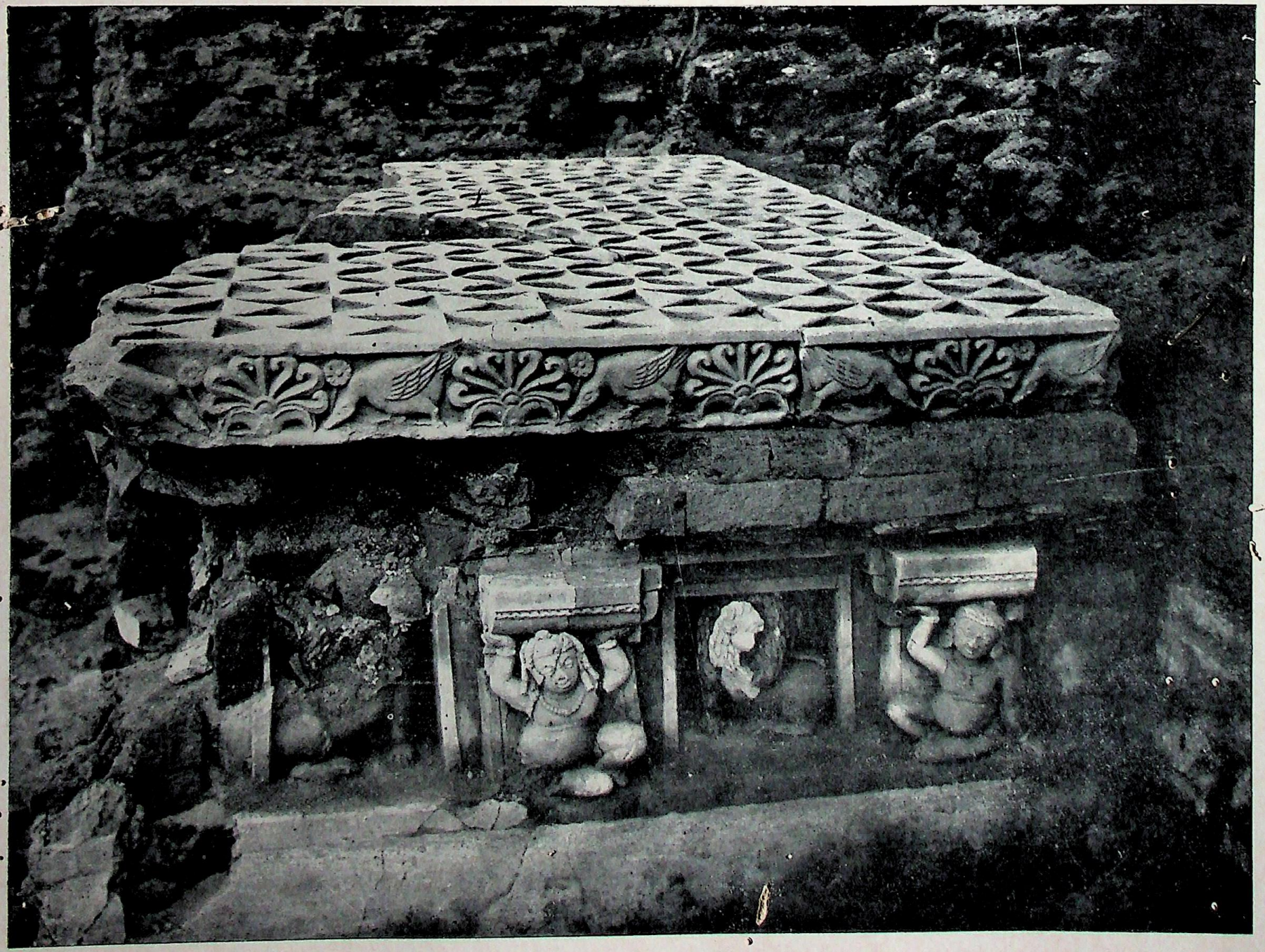


LVII.

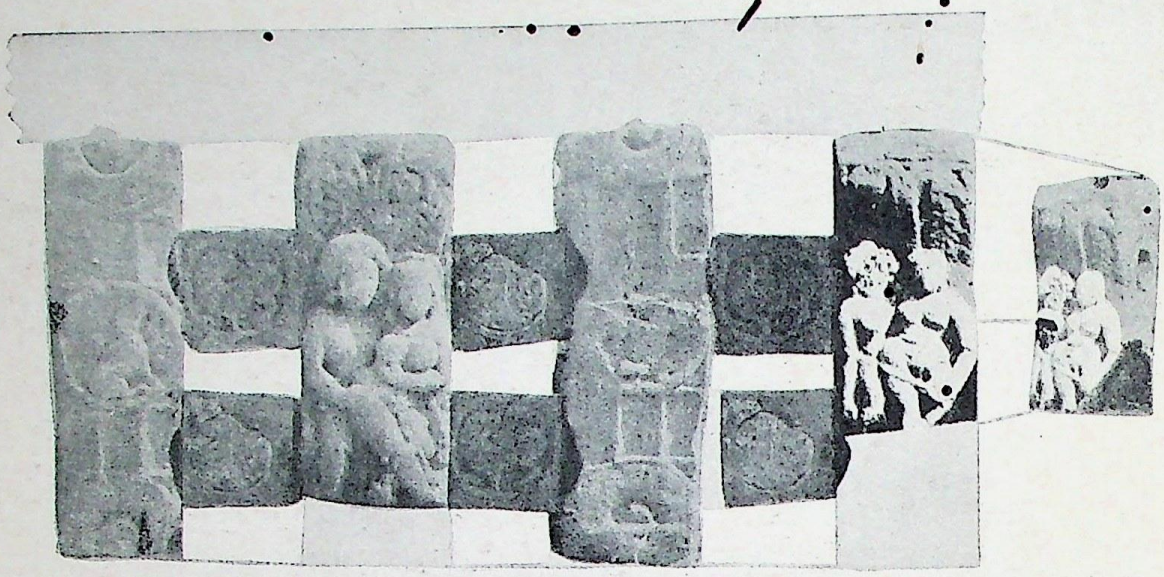


LIX. Mehrauli Yakshi.

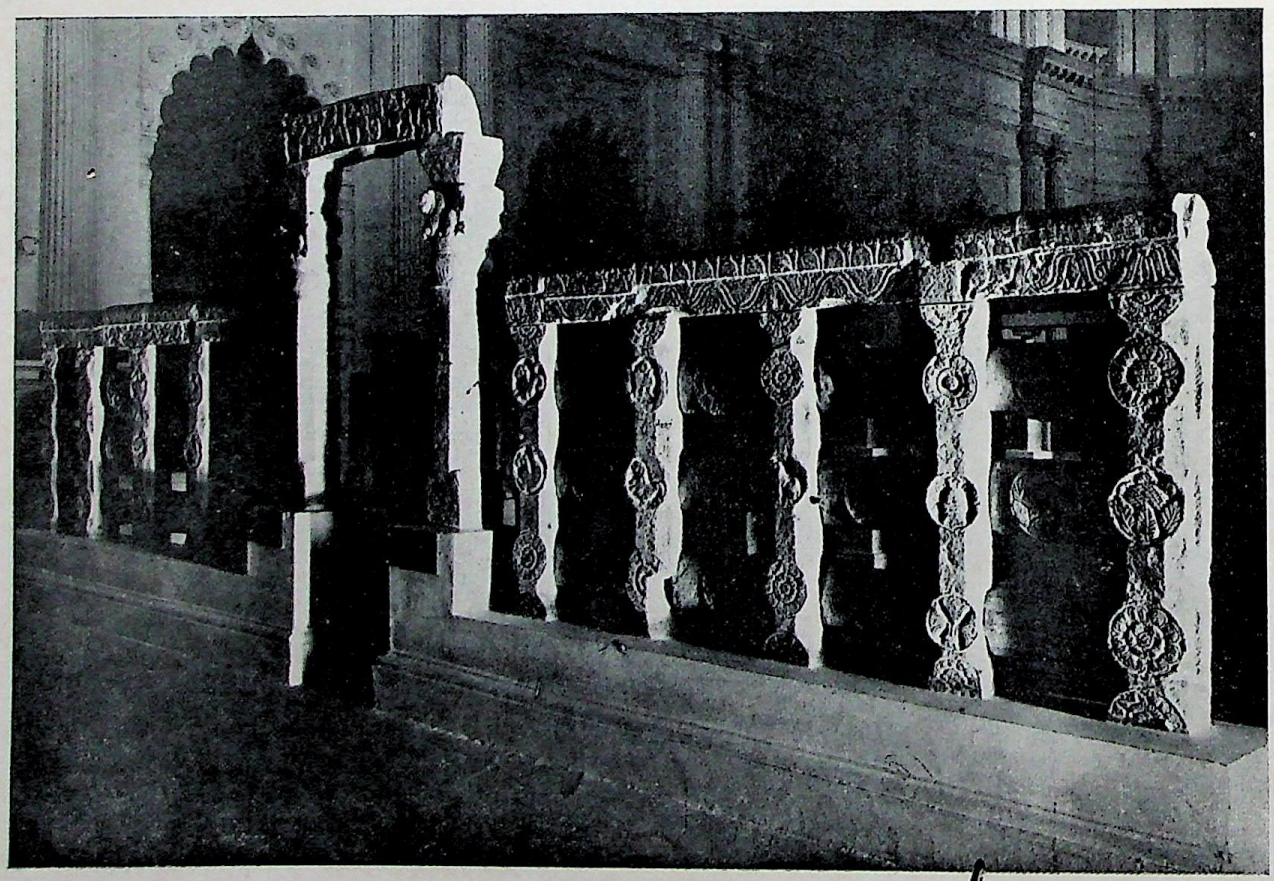
LX. Domuhi Yakshi.



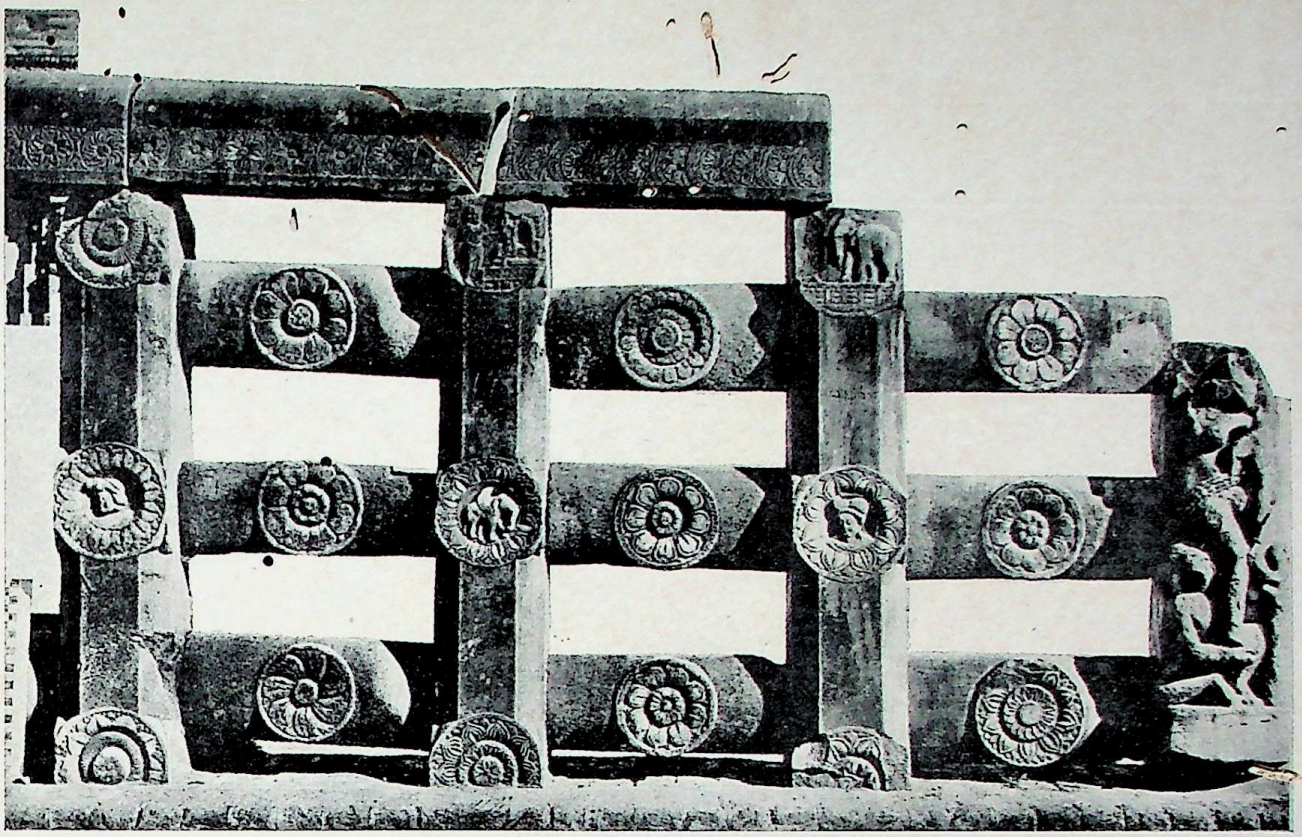
LXI. Vajrasana throne. Bodhgaya temple.



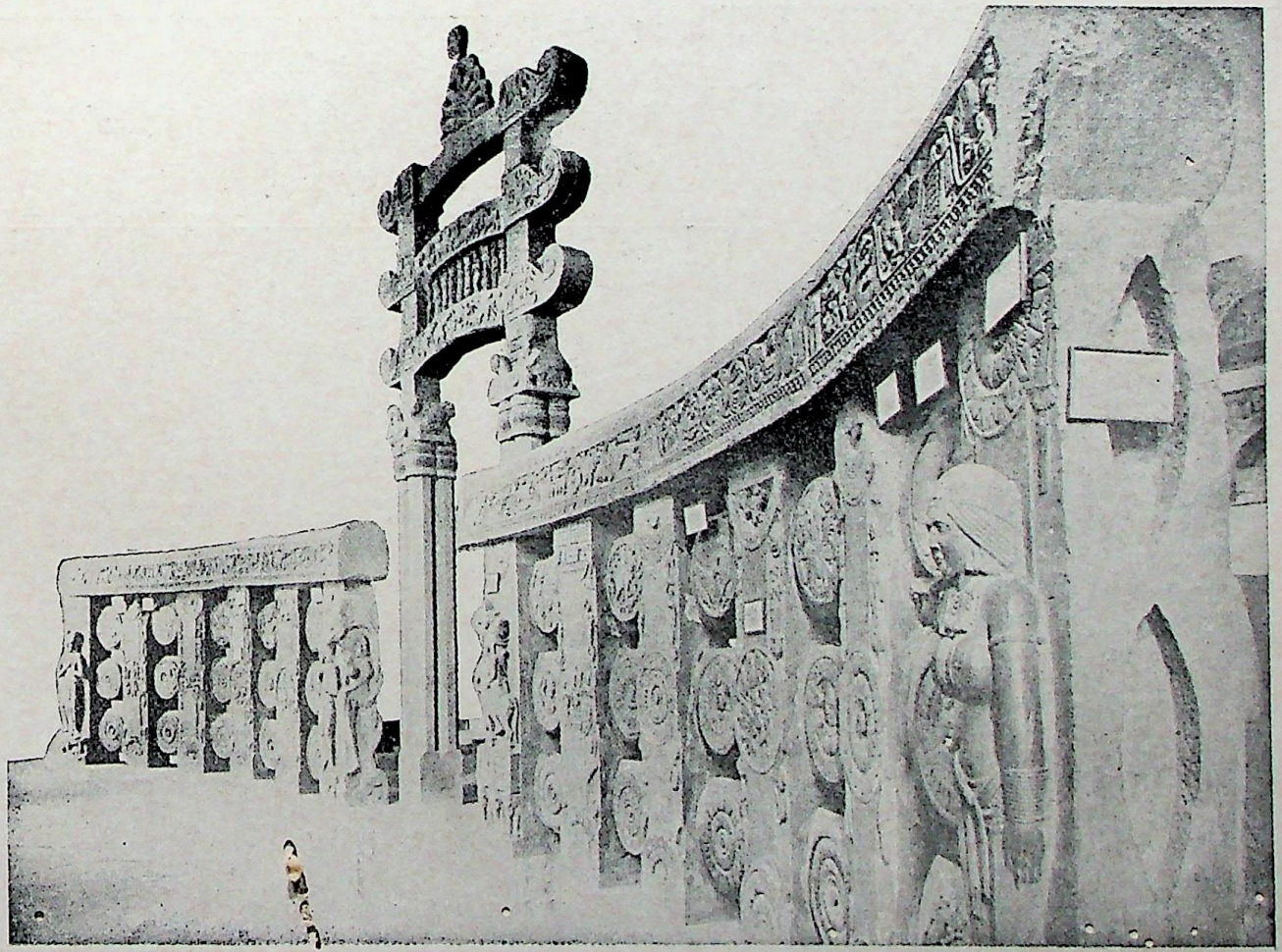
LXII. Stone Railing. Patna.



LXIII. Reconstructed Railing of Mathura Jaina Stupa.

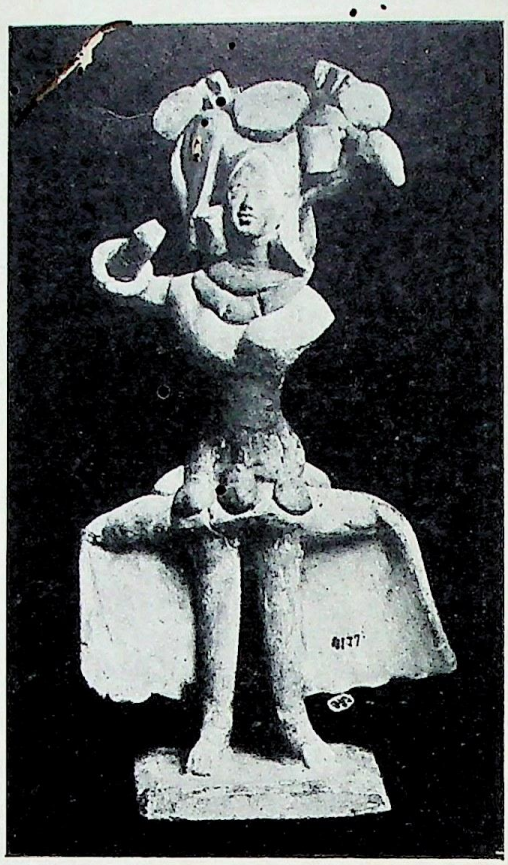


LXIV. Bodhgaya Railing.



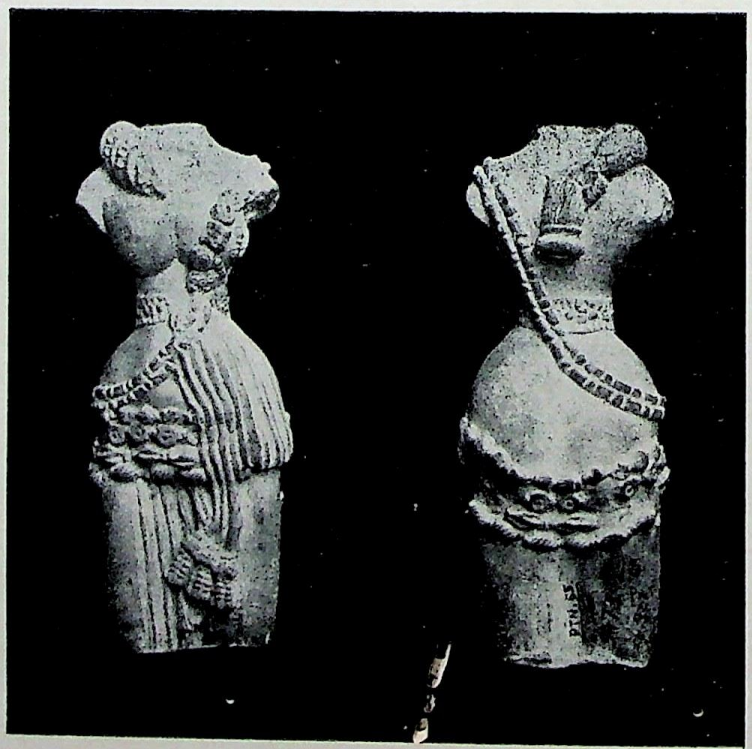
LXV. Reconstructed Stone Railing of Bharhut Stupa.

LXVI.

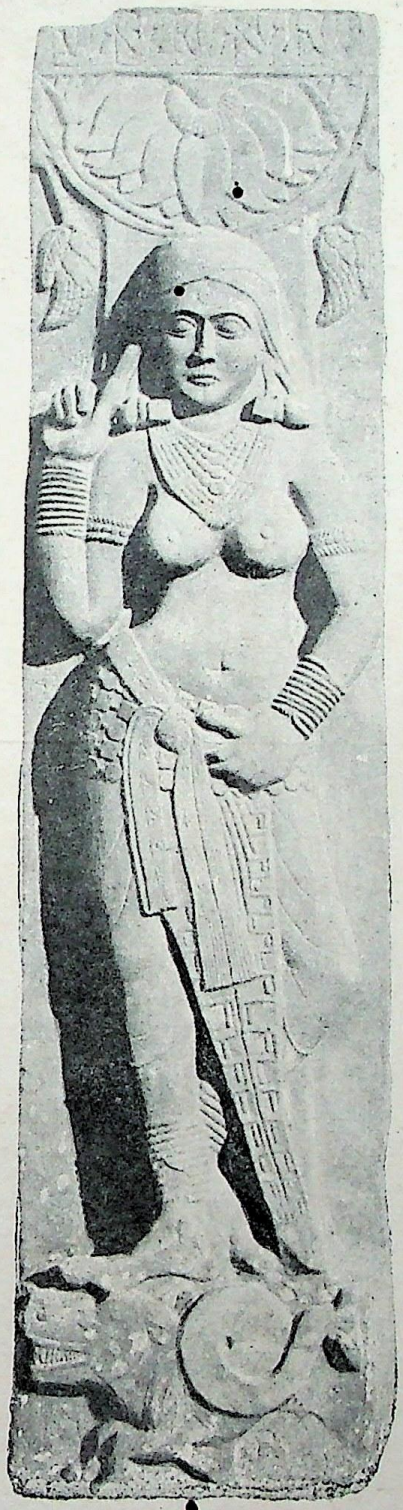


LXVII.

LXVIII.



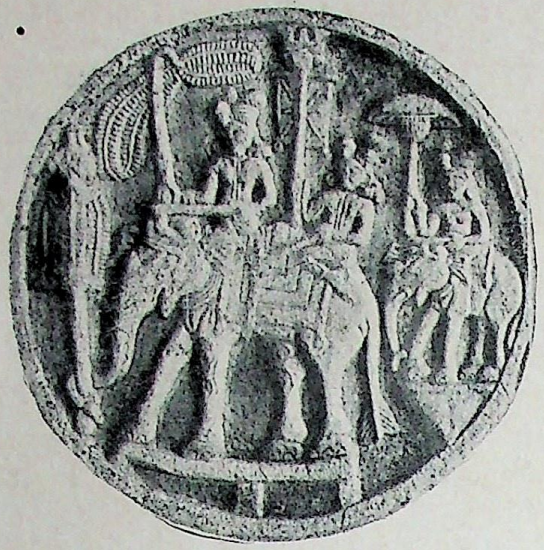
LXIX.



LXX.

From Bharhut.

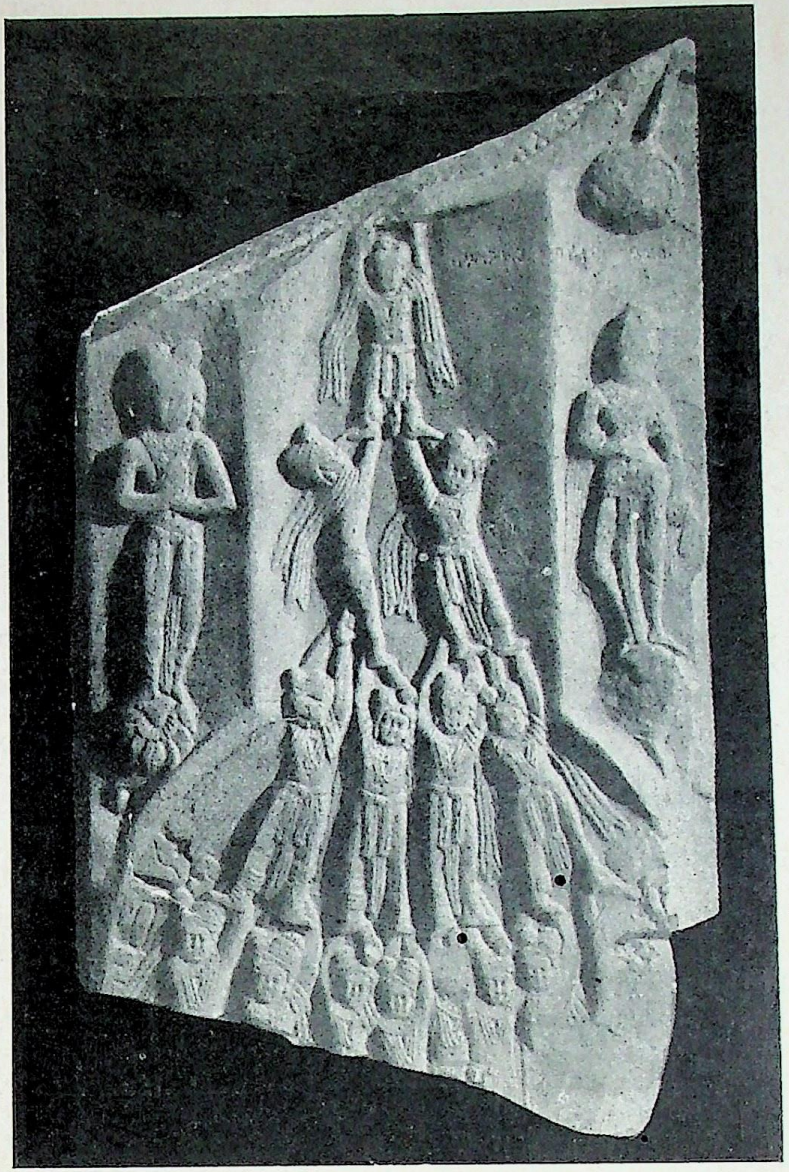
LXXI.



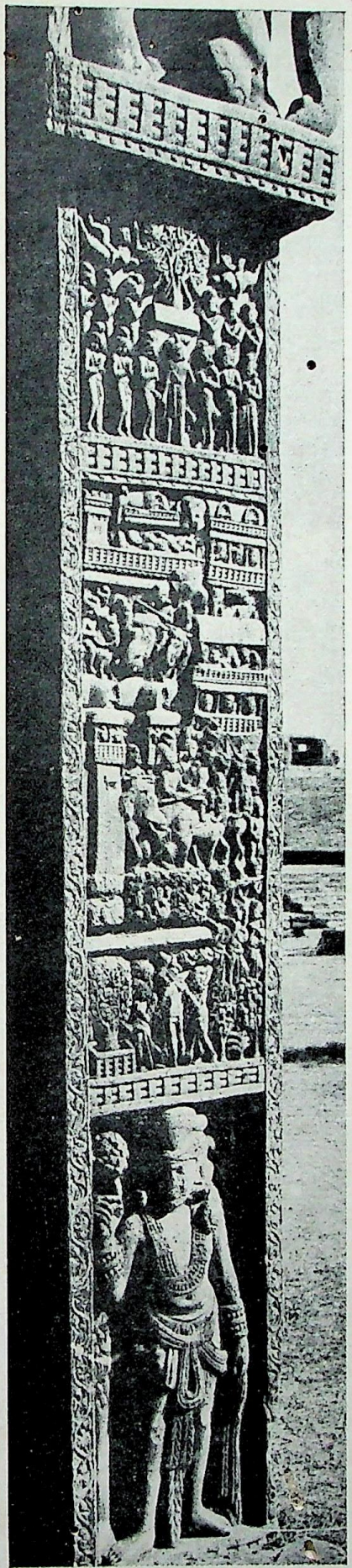
LXXIII.

LXXIV.

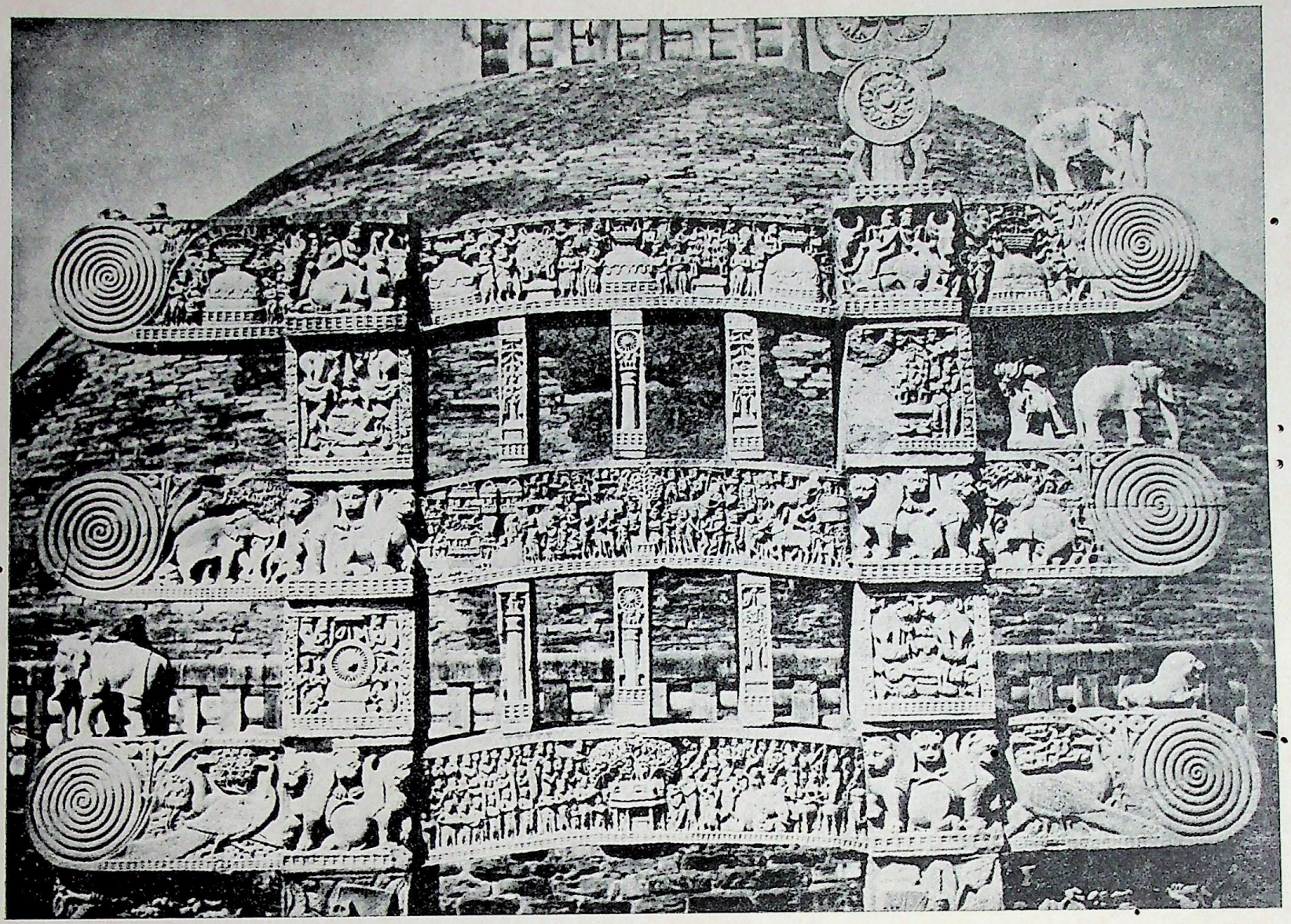
From Bharhut.



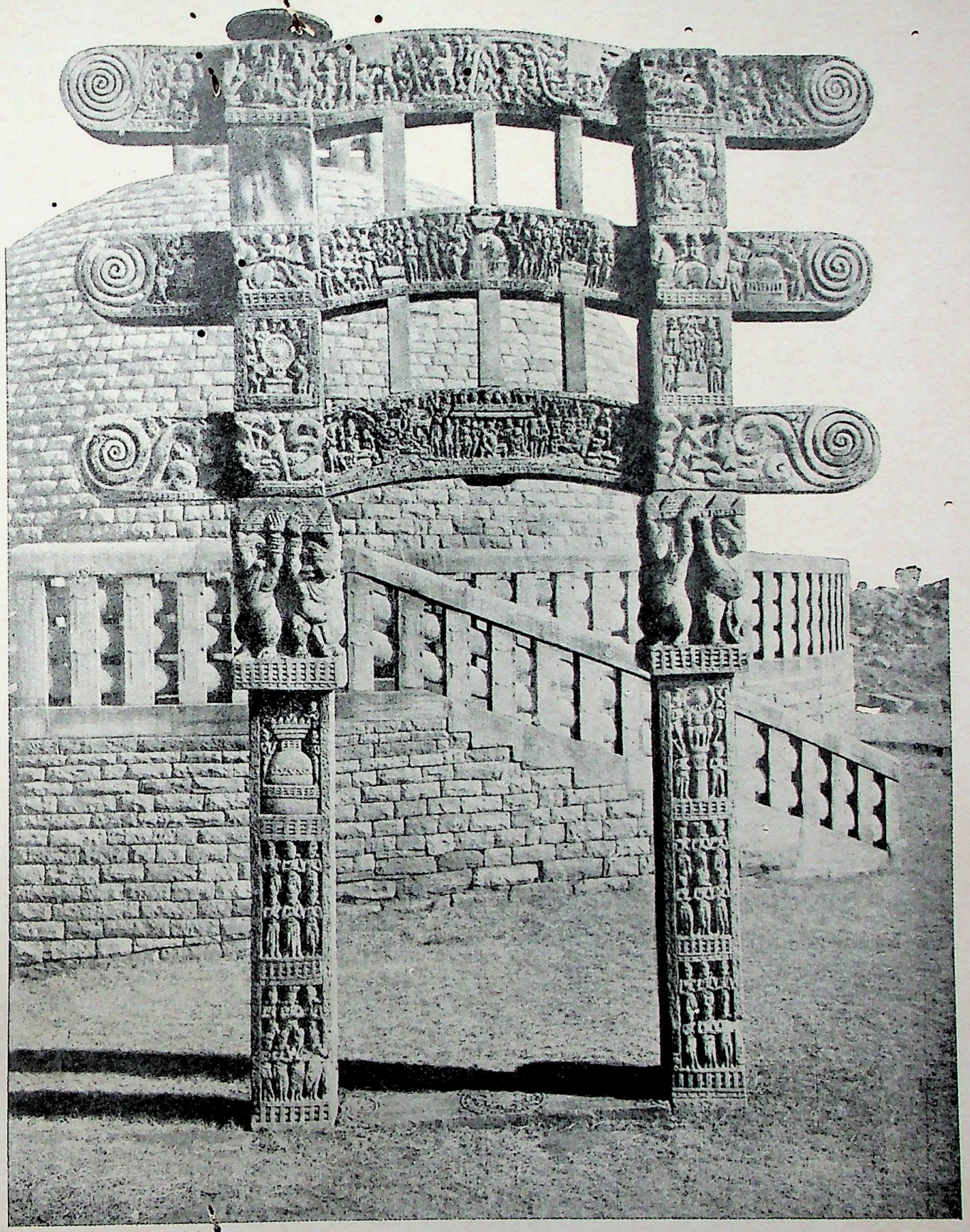
LXXII.



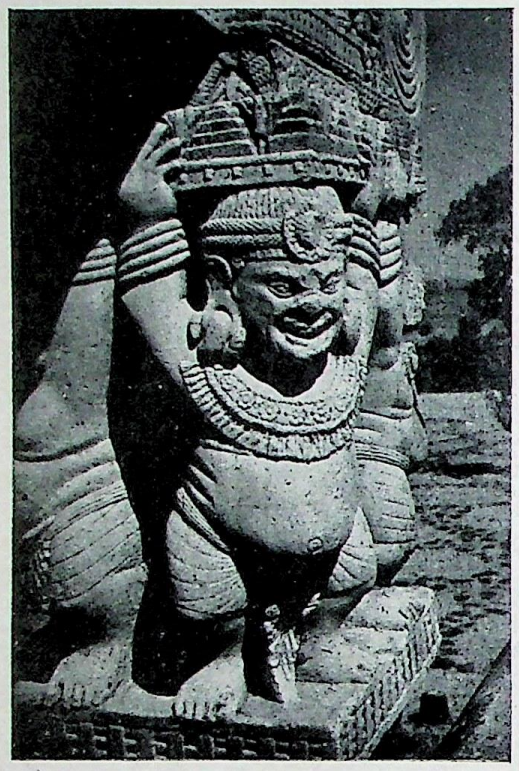
LXXV. Gateway pillars. Sanchi LXXVI.



LXXVI. Eastern Gateway of the Great Stupa, Sanchi.



LXXVIII. Gateway of the Sanchi Stupa III.



LXXIX.

LXXXI.

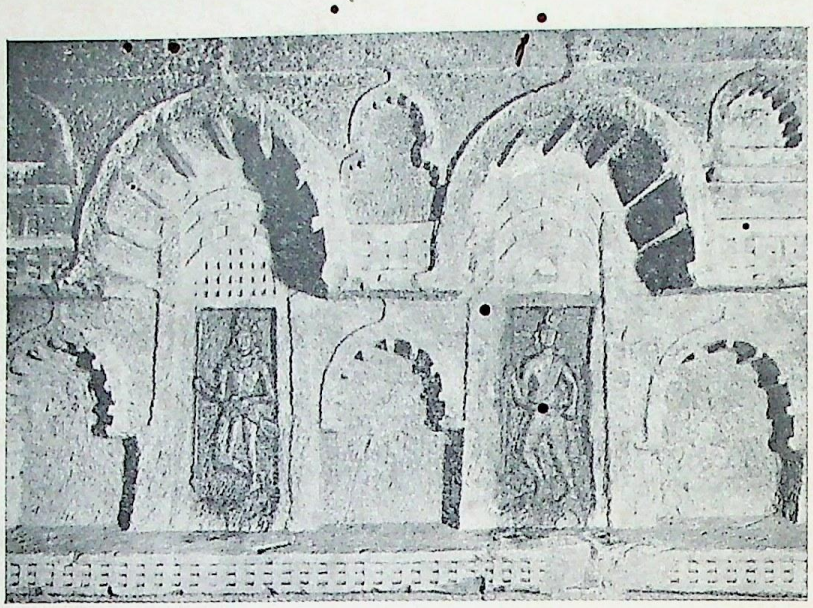
LXXX.

LXXXII.

LXXXIII.

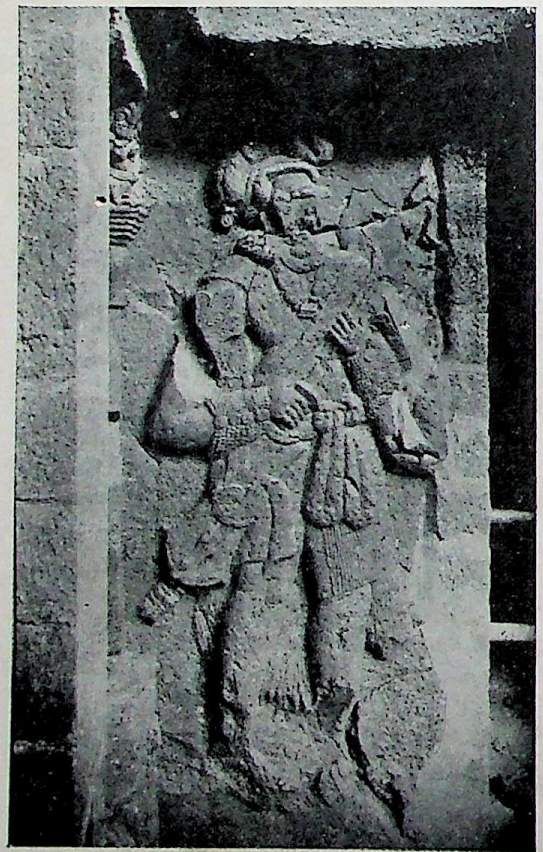
LXXXIV.

Mandhata in Uttarakuru.
Bhaja. 2nd cent. B. C.

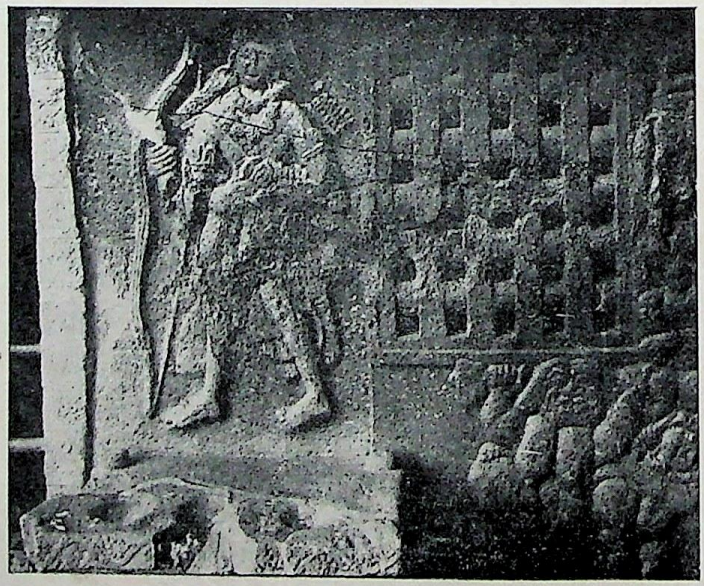


Sculptures in Vihara No. 20. Bhaja, Poona. 2nd cent. B. C.

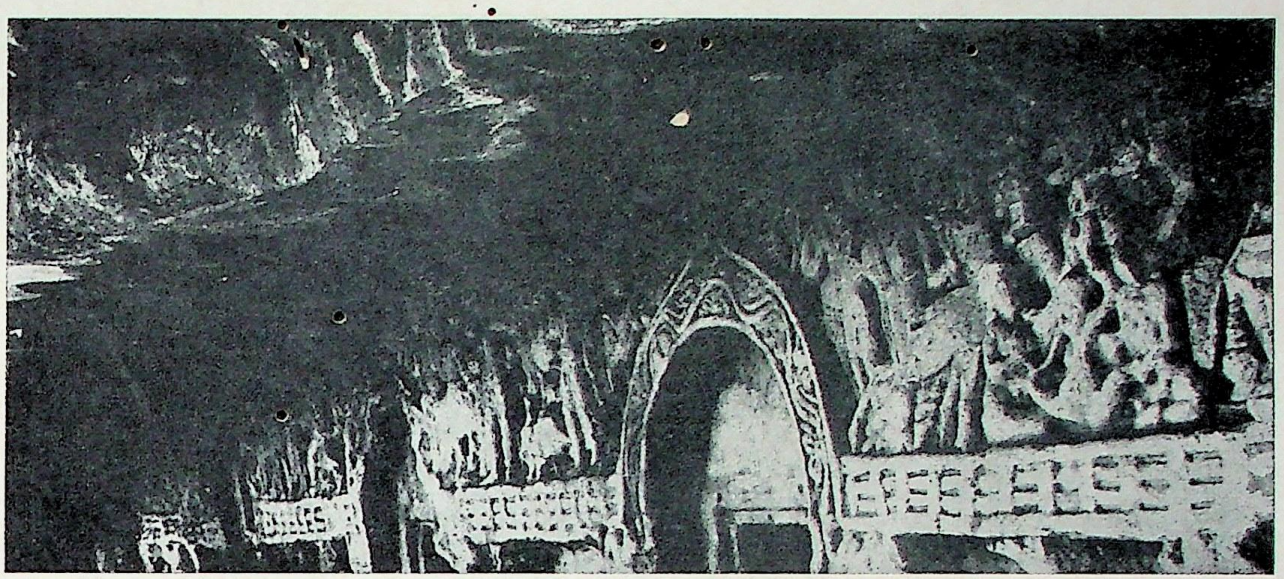
LXXXV.



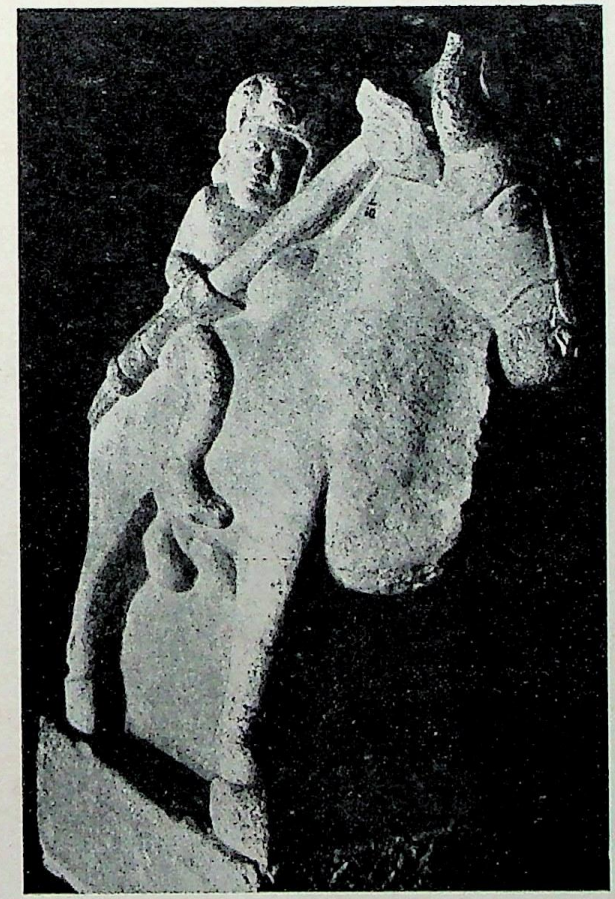
LXXXVI.



LXXXVII.



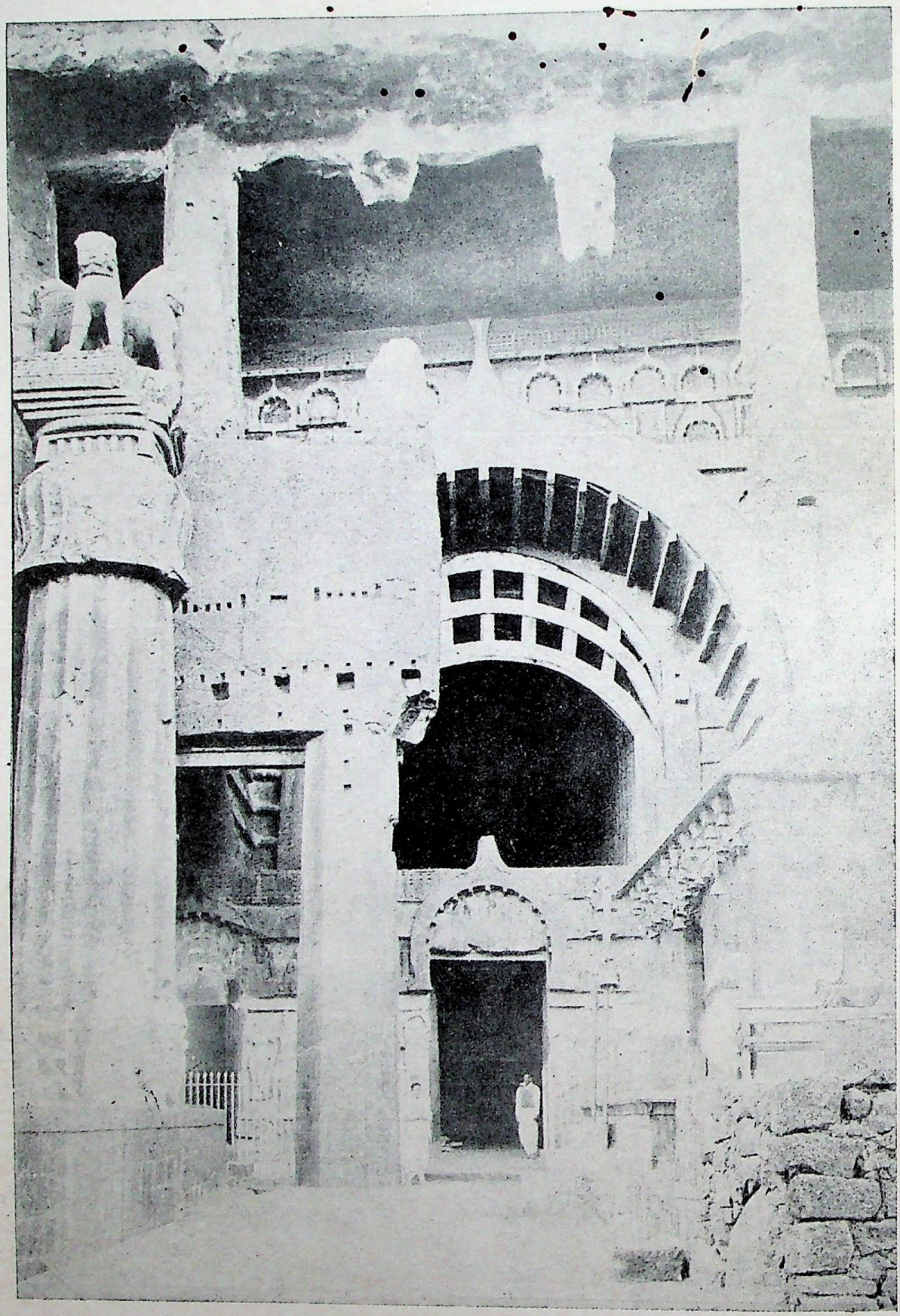
LXXXIX. Friezes in the upper Verandah. Ranigumpha. Orissa.



XC.

Mathura.

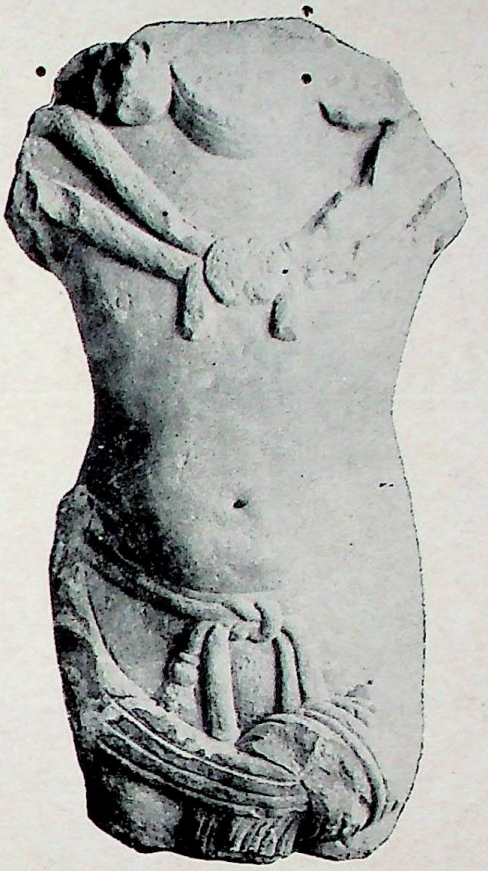
XCI.



LXXXVIII. Kirtimukha & Kirtistambha.
Chaitya Hall. Bhaja. 2nd cent. B. C.

XCII.

Mathura.

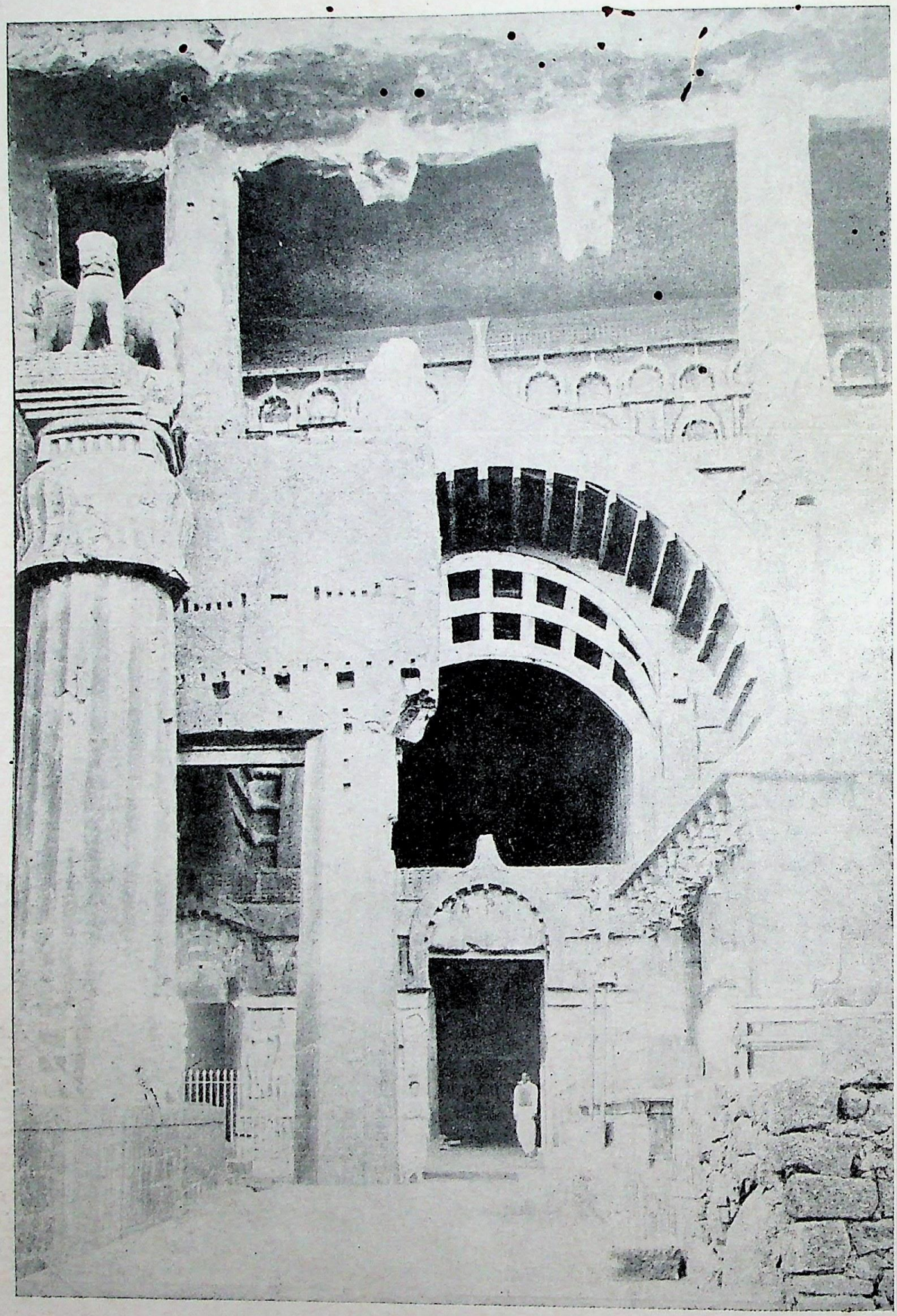


XCIII.

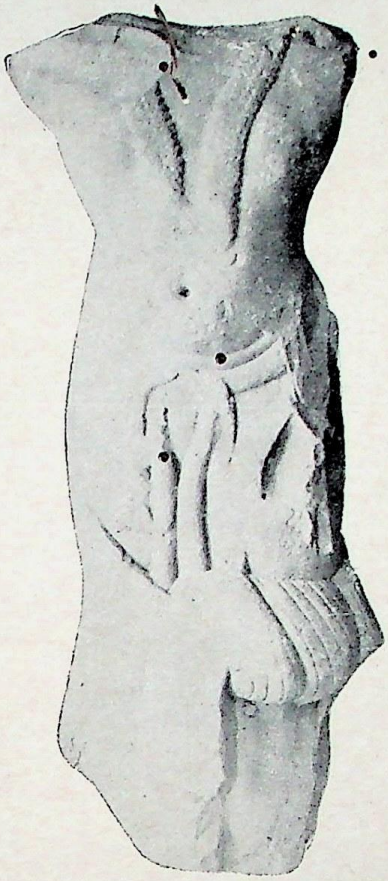
XCIV.

XCV.

XCVI.

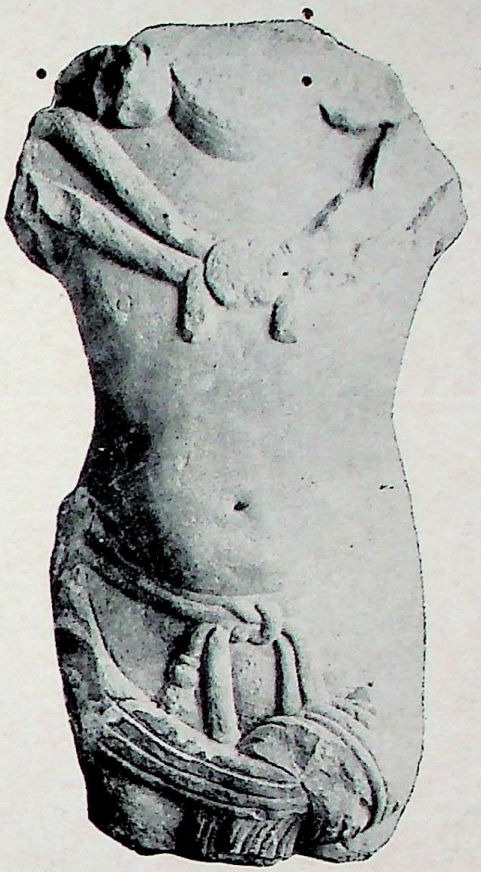


LXXXVIII. Kirtimukha & Kirtistambha.
Chaitya Hall. Bhaja. 2nd cent. B. C.



XCII.

Mathura.



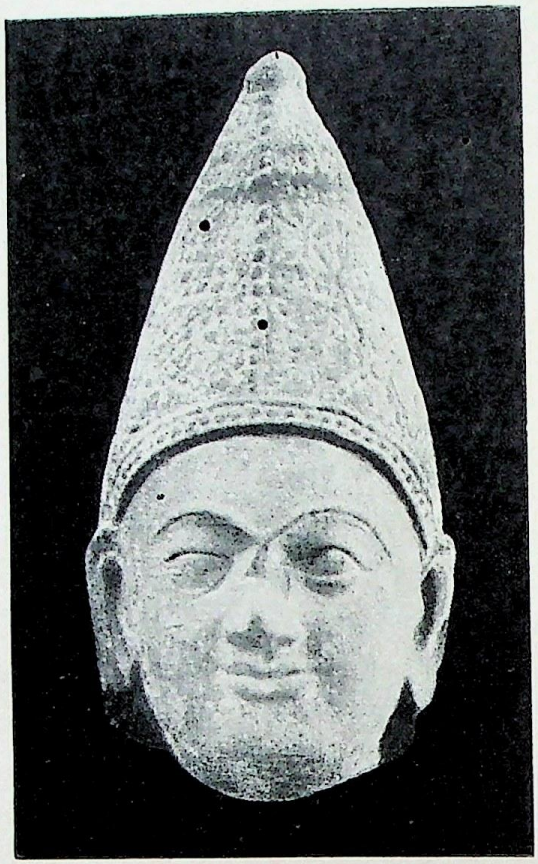
XCIII.

XCIV.

XCV.

XCVI.

XCVII.



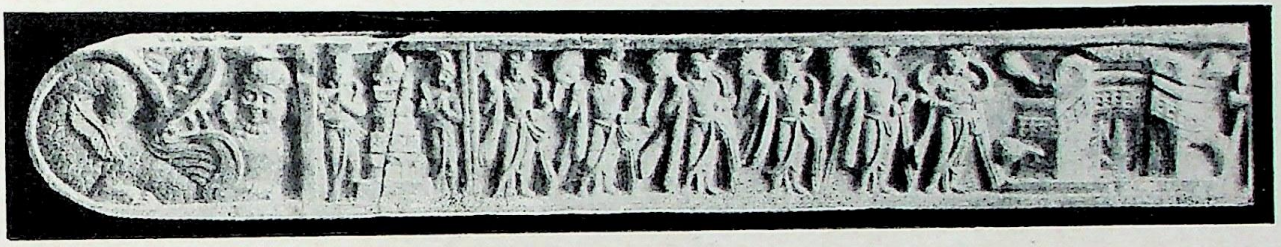
XCVIII.

IC.

C.

CI.

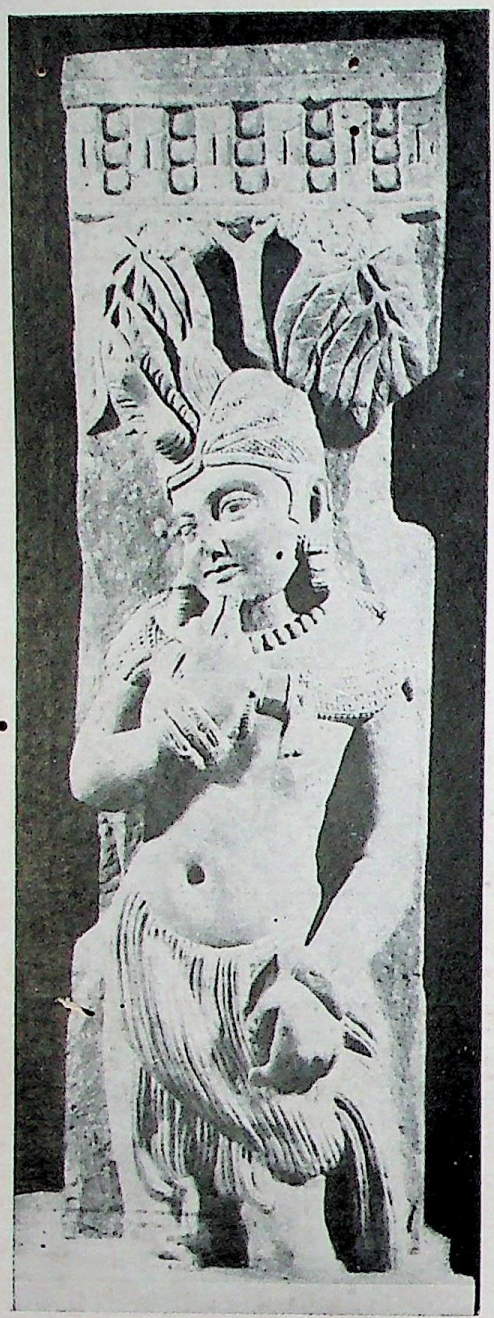
CII.



CIII.

CIV.

CV.



CVI.

CVII.

CVIII.

CIX.

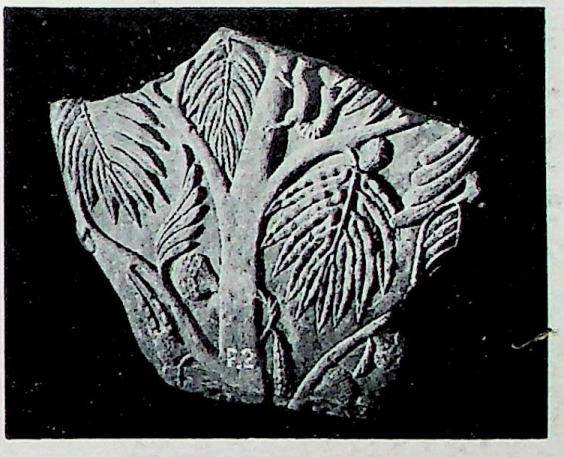
Architectural prices
Mathura.

CXI.

CX.

CXV.

CXVI.

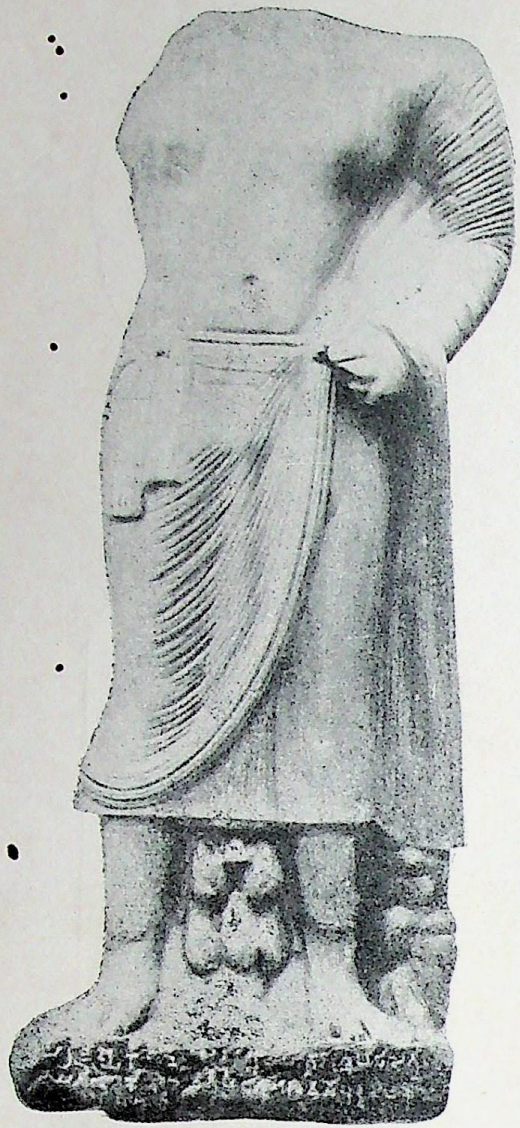


CXVIII.

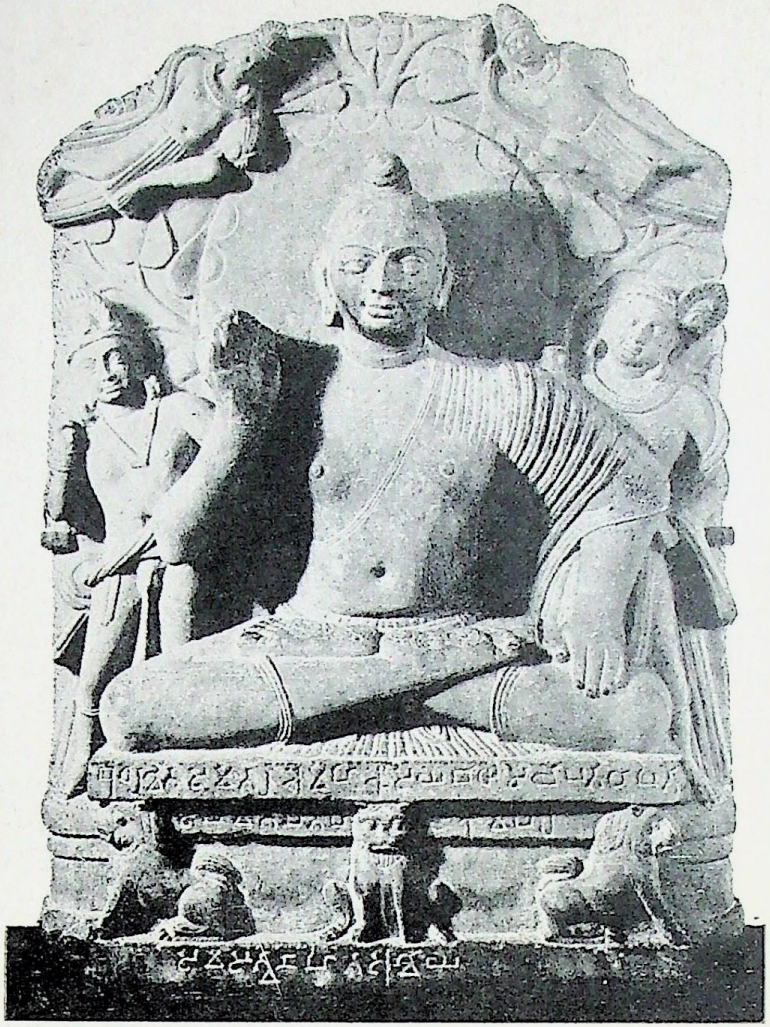
CXVII.

CXIX.

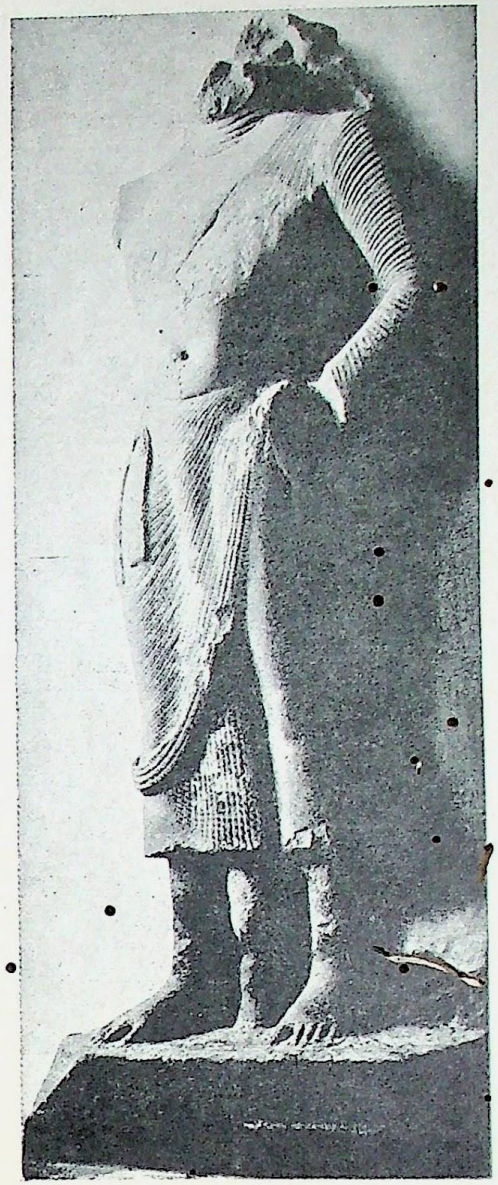
Inscribed Bodhisattva Figures. Mathura.



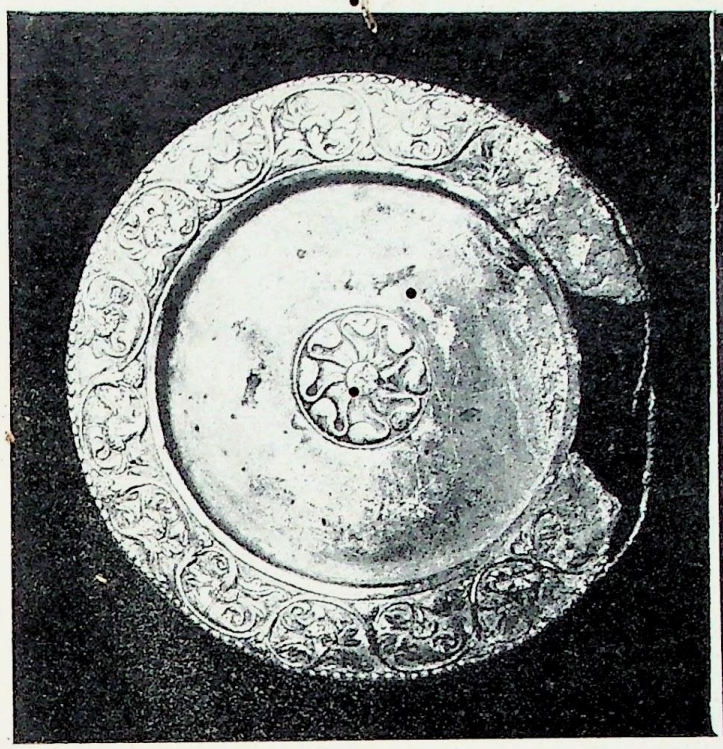
CXIII. Standing



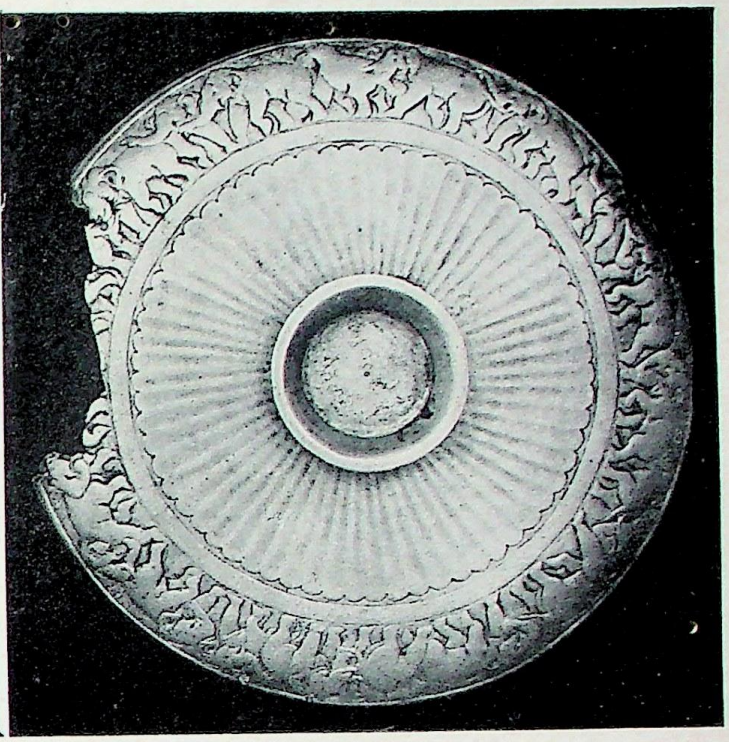
CXIV. Seated



CXII. Standing

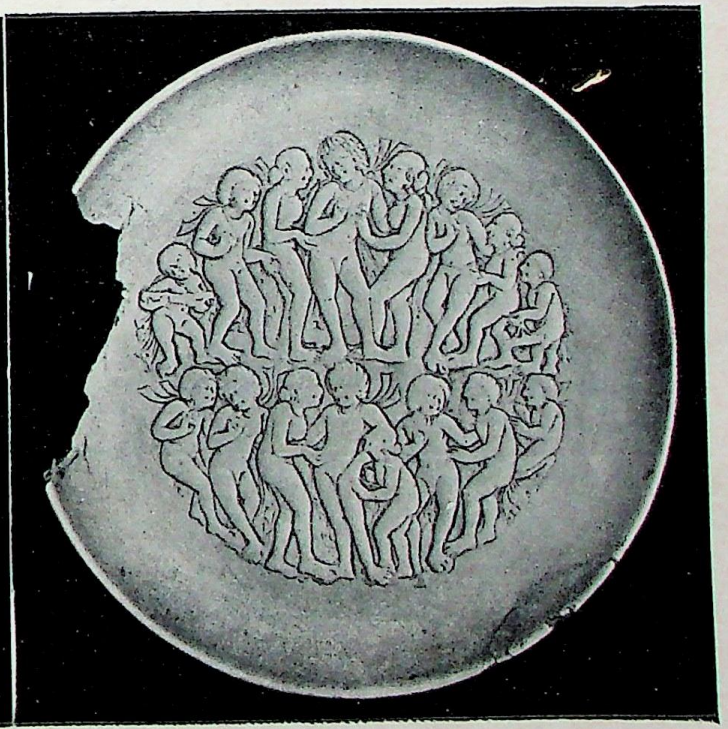


CXX.



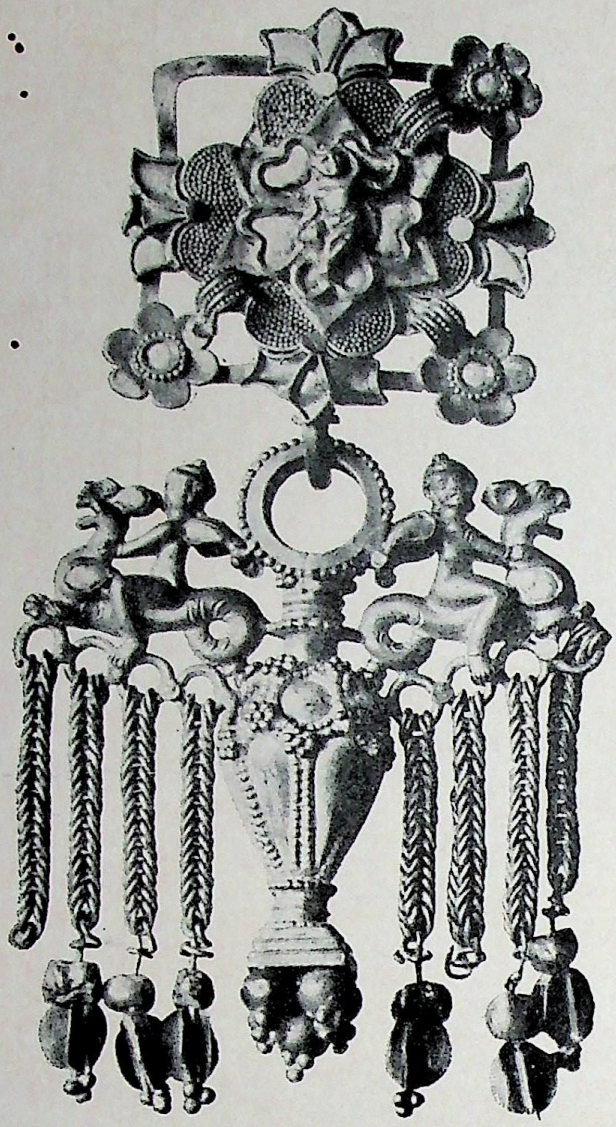
CXXI.

CXXIII.

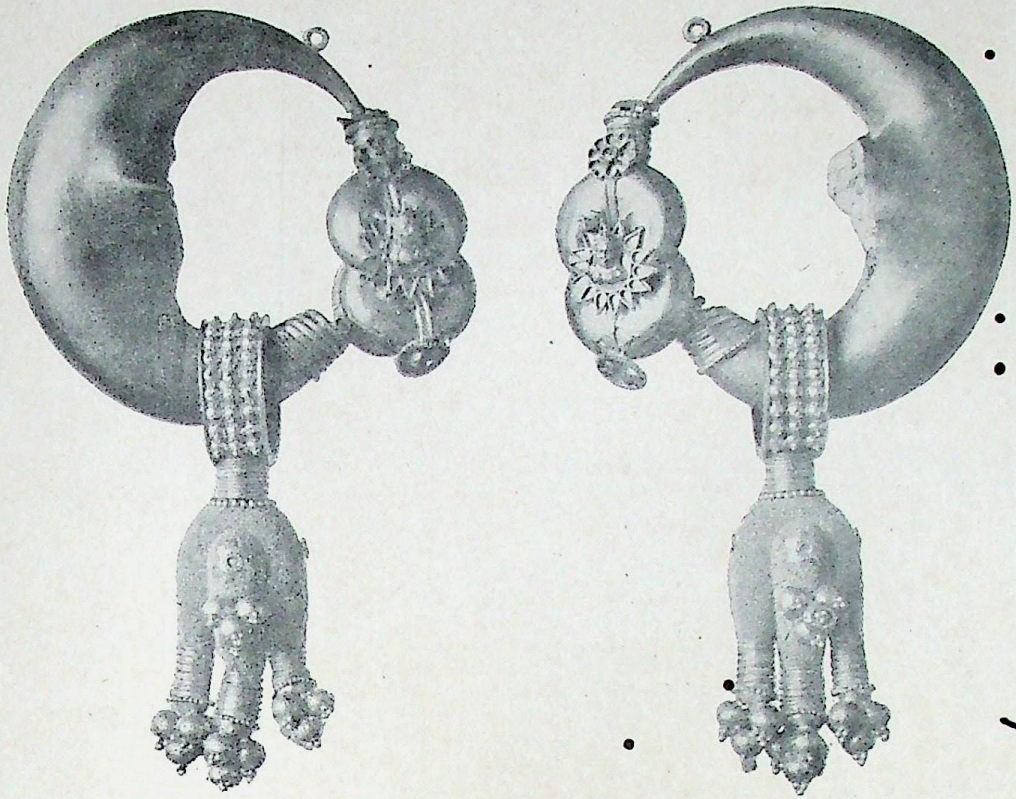


CXXII.

CXX-CXXII. Silver Dishes. Findplace unknown. CXXIII. From Lampsacos.

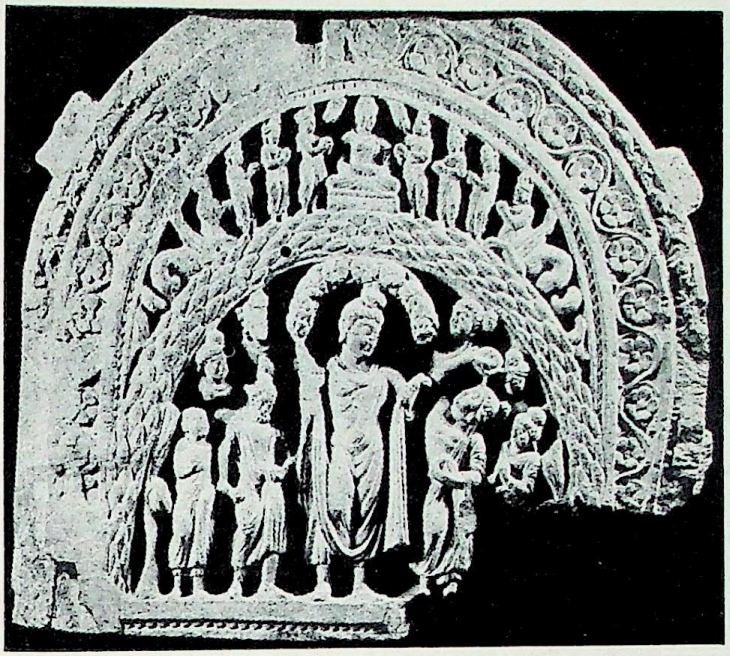


CXXIV.



CXXV.

Taxila Jewellery.



CXXVI.

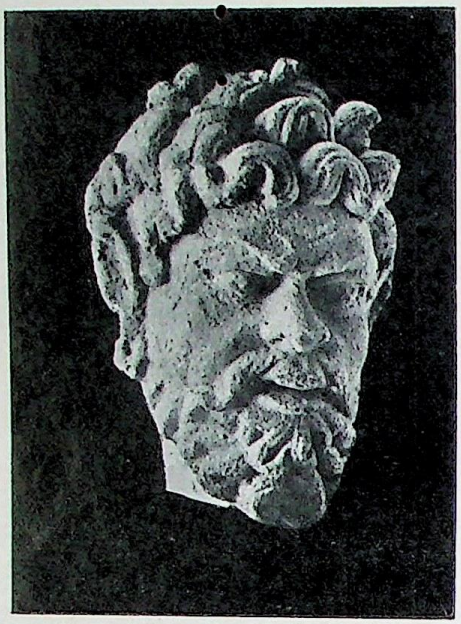
CXXVII.

CXXVIII.

Gandhara Sculptures. 2nd cent. A. D.

Female Stucco head. 5th cent. A. D.

CXXIX.



CXXX.

CXXXI.

CXXXII.

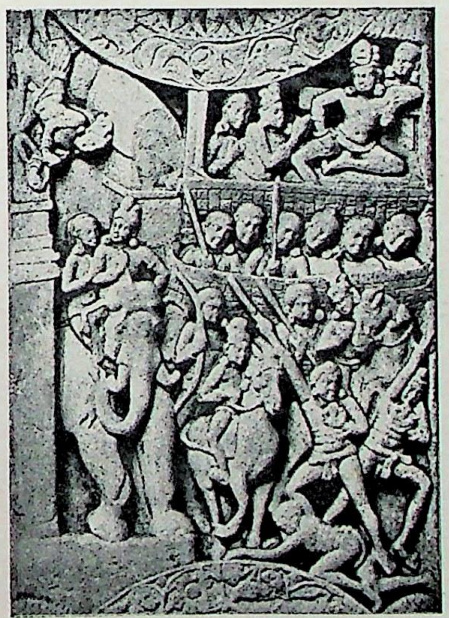
CXXXIII.

CXXXVI.

CXXXVII.

Andhra Sculptures.

CXXXIV.



CXXXV.

CXXXVIII.

CXXXIX. Throne and Dharmachakra Worship. Nagarjunikonda.

APPENDIX II

DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE-DRAWING PLATES

Fig. 1 Human figure, with square body and triangular head ; the bust being filled by zig-zag or wavy lines. Prehistoric rock-painting. From shelters in the Mahadeva Hills. First Series. See p. 11. From Gordon, *The Pre-history of India*, fig. 12 (9).

Fig. 2 Stick-like human figures with square and triangular body and triangular head. Prehistoric rock-painting. From Kabra Pahar and Singhanpur, Raigarh. First Series. See p. 11.

Fig. 3 A group of human figures with bow and arrow. Prehistoric rock-painting. Late Second Series. From the Mahadeva Hills. See p. 11. From Gordon, *ibid.* fig. 13 (1).

Fig. 4 Scene of honey taking from a beehive. Prehistoric rock-painting. See p. 11. From Gordon, *ibid.* fig. 14 (1).

Fig. 5 A giant leading a tiger with a rope. Prehistoric rock-painting. Fourth Series. Mahadeva Hills. See p. 12.

Fig. 6 Copper harpoon with a spear-blade and barbs (*Patra*). Prehistoric. See p. 13.

Fig. 7 Anthropomorphic figure. Copper. Prehistoric. See p. 13.

Fig. 8 Copper celt or cutting tool (*āyasī vāsī*). Prehistoric. See p. 14.

Fig. 9 Copper axe (*paraśu*). Prehistoric. See p. 14.

Fig. 10 a. Map of Harappan sites. Chalcolithic Period. See pp. 15 f.

b. Site-plans showing cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. See p. 17. After *ASI* 1946.

c. Isometric projection of the Great Bath (*Mahāpushkariṇī*). Mohenjo-daro. See p. 19. After Marshall.

d. Isometric projection from southwest of the Great Granary (*Mahākoshṭhā gāra*). Harappa. See p. 19. After Marshall.

Fig. 11 a and b. Dockyard. Lothal. See p. 20.

a. showing dockyard spill-channel.

b. showing a general view.

Fig. 12 Bearded male head and bust, figure of a Yogī. Limestone. The figure is draped in a shawl with trefoil pattern. From its eyes it seems to have been either a deity or a Yogī priest. The receding forehead, inlaid eyes and shaven upper lip show similarity with Summerian figures. Ht. 17. 5 cm. Mohenjo-daro. See p. 20.

Fig. 13 Male torso. Red sandstone. Drilled holes for movable arms and head. Harappa. Ht. 9 cm. See p. 22.

Fig. 14 Female torso, dancing figure reconstructed. Noteworthy are the narrow waist and the feminine hips of the figure. Grey limestone. Ht. 10 cm. Harappa. See p. 22.

Fig. 15 Dancing girl (*Nṛitū*). Cast Bronze figure (*madūchchhishṭa kāṁsya-bimba*) Mohenjo-daro. See pp. 22-3.

Fig. 16 Mother Goddess. Terracotta figure. Mohenjo-daro. See p. 24.

Fig. 17 Standing female figure. Terracotta. Mohenjo-daro. See p. 24.

Fig. 18 a. Terracotta female figurine. Mathura. 4th cent. B. C.
b. Terracotta female figure. Taxila. 3rd cent. B.C. See p. 24.

Fig. 19 Humped bull. Terracotta. Mohenjo-daro. See p. 25.

Fig. 20 Incised and painted designs on pottery. Indus Valley. See p. 26.
a. concentric circles. Incised. Mohenjo-daro.
b. check pattern with animals, birds, fishes and human figures. Harappa.
c. intersecting bangles. Incised. Mohenjo-daro.
d. fisherman with two nets. Harappa.
e. wavy lines, and triangles. Mohenjo-daro.
f. tree with part of diamond-chequer. Harappa.
i. red vase with black painted designs. Harappa (cemetery R 37).
j. sun-symbol with a thousand rays. Mohenjo-daro.
k. fret.
l. animal with enormous horns. Two stags with a hunter, and two horned peacocks in flight. Burial, Harappa.
m. parabolas.
n. tree in the centre and patterns round it. Harappa.
o. punched circlets. (Not on pottery). Mackay, *FEM.* pl. *LXXI,* 26. Mohenjo-daro.
p. zig-zag design in bolder manner. Nāl.
q. *pīpal* tree. Burial, Harappa.

r. four-petalled flowers (*chauphuliā*). Harappa.
s. *pīpal* leaves and birds. Mohenjo-daro.
t. birds surrounded by plants. Comb design before them. Also human-eye-like design. Mohenjo-daro.
u. fish-scales (*śalka*). Mohenjo-daro.

Fig. 21 Pottery types. Indus Valley. See pp. 26-8.
a. necked goblet with round bottom.
b. pot with round bottom.
c. knobbed goblet.
d. dish-on-stand.
e. decorated jar.
f. shallow dish.
g. beaker with flat base.
h. cup with conical bottom.
i. deeper dish or bowl.
j. perforated charcoal burner.
k. jar-stand.
l. wide and shallow broad-based dish or platter.
m. ellipsoid jar with raised horizontal mouldings on the base.
n. deeper dish.
o. large bulging jar with narrow bottom.
p. drinking cup.
q. large storage jar with conical bottom.
r. large storage jar.
s. cup with lug handle.
t-u. vessels with narrow base.
v. flask with bulging girth.
w. cylindrical vessel with round base.

Fig. 22 Fillets, combs and hair-pins. Indus Valley. See p. 31.
a. fillet.
b. conical gold cap. Mohenjo-daro.
c. bronze mirror.
d. V-shaped ivory comb. Mohenjo-daro.
e. fine ivory comb. Mohenjo-daro.
f. stag with circle ornament (from Alaca "Royal Tombs", see *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 34). Similar ivory pin with an ibex comes from Mohenjo-daro (not illustrated).

g. steatite bead-like object showing three coalesced monkeys.
h. well-made ivory hair-pin surmounted by the head of a dog-like animal. Mohenjo-daro.
i. bronze pin surmounted with two heads of black bucks. Mohenjo-daro.
j. ivory hair-pin with flat top decorated on both sides with incised lines. Mohenjo-daro.
k. spiral-headed metal pin. Mohenjo-daro.

Fig. 23 Representative seals and copper tablets from Indus Valley. See pp. 32-37.
a. inscribed seal showing unicorn, b. bull, c. elephant, d. tiger.
e. inscribed copper tablet showing unicorn, f. bull, g. elephant, h. tiger.
j. prismatic seal showing a file of four marching animals. See pp. 37-8.
i. and, k. seals showing mythological creatures.

Fig. 24 Winged lion (*sapaksha simha*). See p. 72.
a & d. from Sanchi gateway.
b. from Amaravatī Stūpa.
c. from Mathura Kushāṇa lion-capital.

Fig. 25 Griffin. See p. 72.
a. from Bharhut copings.
b. from Sanchi gateway.

Fig. 26 Triton (*mahoraga*). See p. 72.
a. from Greek art. After Combaz, *L' Inde et l' Orient classique*, pl. 84.
b & d. from Mathura.
c. from Sanchi.

Fig. 27 Centaur (*Kinnara*). See p. 72.
a. from Mesopotamia. Combaz, pl. 75.
b. from Sanchi gateway.
c. from Bodhgaya railing.
d. from Gandhāra.

Fig. 28 Suparṇa. See p. 73.
a. from Amaravati reliefs.
b. from Bharhut reliefs.
c. from Sanchi reliefs.
d. from Mathura.

Fig. 29 Double-headed eagle.
a-c. from Cappadosia, Si-ngan-fou & Kizil respectively. After Combaz, pl. 155.

Fig. 30 *Ekagrīva bahūdara.* From Ajanta. See p 73.

Fig. 31 Gaja-Saṁghāṭa. From Karle cave. See p. 73.

Fig. 32 Haya-Saṁghāṭa. From Bedsa cave. See p. 73.

Fig. 33 Sūrya. See p. 73.

a. from Bamiyan. Combaz, pl. 137.

b. from Bodhgaya relief.

c. after Combaz, pl. 133.

Fig. 34 *Kapi-śīrshaka* (battlement or merlon). See p. 73.

a. from Mesopotamia. Combaz, pl. 13.

b. from Bharhut.

Fig. 35 Tree-of-Life (*Śrī-vṛiksha*).

a. & b. from Egypt and Western Asia. Combaz, pl. 62.

c. from Sanchi.

Fig. 36 Palmette and honeysuckle.

a. honeysuckle. From Rampurvā Bull capital.

b. and c. palmette. From Western Asia. Combaz, pl. 149; d. from Rampurvā Bull-capital.

Fig. 37 Various motifs. See p. 74.

a-c. volute, from Sarnath and Patna.

d. from Babylonia.

e-f. acanthus leaf (*kaṇṭakāri*). From Gandhāra.

Fig. 38 Site-map of Rājgṛiha and Giriyeka. Based on Cunningham, *ASR.* I, and *Ancient India*, No. 7. See p. 75.

Fig. 39 Rājgṛiha cyclopean wall at the Bāṇa Gaṅgā defile. See p. 75.

Fig. 40 *Jarāsandha kā Baiṭhaka.* From Cunningham, *ASR.* I. See p. 76.

Fig. 41 Site-map of Lauriā Nandangarh. From Cunningham, *ASR.* I, pl. XXIII.

Fig. 42 Repoussé gold plaque showing the Earth Goddess. Lauriā Nandangarh. See p. 77.

Fig. 43 Mother-Goddess Ring-stones from various ancient sites. For details of illustrations see pp. 77-80.

Fig. 44 Relics from the Piprahwā Stūpa. See pp. 82-3.

a. stone, pottery and crystal pots and caskets.

b. inscription on the stone vase.

c. female dancer on gold plaque.

f. goddess on gold plaque.

d, e, and g-y. various other objects of gold and semi-precious stones.

Fig. 45 Ground plan of the Mauryan pillared Assembly Hall. Kumrahar. See p. 86.

Fig. 46 Monolithic animal capitals of Aśokan pillars. Polished Chunar sandstone. Maurya (3rd cent. B.C.). See pp. 96-101.

a. Lion-capital (*Siṁhaśīrshaka*). Bakhira, Muzaffarpur Dt., Bihar.

b. Elephant-capital (*Gajendraśīrshaka*). Sankisa, Furrukhabad Dt., U.P.

c. Bull-capital (*Vṛishabhaśīrshaka*). Rampurwa, Tirhut, Bihar.

d. Lion-capital (*Siṁhaśīrshaka*). Lauriā-Nandangarh.

e. Lion-capital (*Siṁhaśīrshaka*). Rampurwa, Tirhut, Bihar.

f. Lion-capital (*Siṁhaśīrshaka*). Sarnath, Varanasi Dt., U.P.

g.(i) Mahā Dharma Chakra (The Great Wheel-of-Law), reconstructed. (ii-iv) Original fragments of the Great Wheel. Polished Chunār sandstone. Sarnath Museum.

h. Lion-capital (*Siṁhaśīrshaka*). In front of the Great Stūpa, Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh.

i-l. Four Noble Animals (*Mahā Ājāneya Paśu*), on the round drum (*aṇḍa*) of the Sarnath Lion-capital. Elephant, Lion, Bull and Horse. Styled together as *Chatuppada paṁkti* ("The Team of Quadrupeds").

m. Lion-capital with four great animals on the abacus, winged lion (*sapakshasiṁha* or *śarabha*), elephant, horse and double-humped Bactrian camel (*dvi-kakubha*, or Rajasthani *bekhūṁbhiyā* बेखूंभिया). Udaigiri. After Cunningham, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, pl. 30. (Probably Gupta).

Fig. 47 Monolithic stone railing (*ekāśmaka vedikā*). Maurya. Once fixed in the *Harmikā* of the Jagatsiṁha Stūpa. Sarnath.

Fig. 48 Rock-cut cave-dwellings (*kubhā=guhā*). Popularly known as Sātghar. Donated by Aśoka and Daśaratha. 3rd cent. B. C. Barabar (Pravaragiri) and Nagarjuni Hills, Gaya Dt., Magadha. Plans from Cunningham, *ASR*. See pp. 92-3.

a. Gopī Cave. Nagarjuni Group.

b. Vadathi and Vapiya Caves. Nagarjuni Group.

c. Sudāmā Cave. Excavated in the 12th year of Aśoka. Barabar Group.

d. Lomas Ṛishi. Barabar Group.

e. Viśvāmitra or Vishwajhoparī. Barabar Group.

f. Karṇa Chopār. Barabar Group.

Fig. 49 Elephant figure (inscribed, *gajatame*). Carved on Kalsi rock. Dehradun Dt. Maurya Period. See p. 91.

Fig. 50 The Great Yaksha (*Mahākāya Yaksharāja*). Inscribed, [*Mā*]*nibhada*. C. 3rd cent. B. C. Parkham, Mathura. See p. 111.

Fig. 50x Yaksha statue. Patna. See pp. 112-3.

Fig. 50y Yakshī statue. Besnagar. See p. 111

Fig. 50z Maṇibhadra Yaksha statue. Pawaya, Gwalior. See p. 111, 112.

Fig. 51 Yaksha statue. From Barodā, Mathura Dt. See pp. 111.

Fig. 52 Yakshī with flywhisk (*Chāmaradhāriṇī*). Didārganj, Patna. See p. 111.

Fig. 53 Threefaced Yaksha statue (*Trimukha*). From Rajghat, Varanasi. Now, Bharat Kala Bhavan, B. H. U. See p. 111.

Fig. 54 Ground plan (*talanyāsa*) of a Stūpa. See p. 127.

Fig. 55 Railing (*vedikā*) and its component parts, *ālambanapiṇḍikā* (basement), *sūchī* (crossbar), *thambha* (upright pillar) and *Ushṇīsha* (coping). See p. 127.

Fig. 56 Toraṇa gateway with the superstructure of three architraves. See p. 127.

Fig. 57 The Great Stūpa (Mahāchetiya), Sanchi. Showing its component parts, as *mahāvedikā*, *toraṇa*, *trimedhi*, *harmikā* and tri-chhatrāvalī (triple parasols). See p. 128.

Fig. 58 Toraṇa pillar with capital of addorsed lions. From Bharhut Stūpa. Now, Indian Museum. See p. 130.

Fig. 59 Toraṇa gateway of Bharhut Stūpa. Showing a section of the railing, two upright posts with capitals, supporting a complex superstructure of three horizontal architraves and small uprights (*trivalī jāla*). The whole structure being known as *śiṁśumāraśiraḥ* from the crocodile motif on the spiral ends. On the top-most architrave is the Dharmachakra symbol on a honey-suckle, flanked by two *nandipadas*. On the lower architraves are rows of lions and elephants worshipping the Bodhi-tree. See p. 130.

Fig. 60 Railing carved with lotuses on the cross-bars and pillars of the *Padmavaravedikā* type. On the pillar, figure of Chulakokā Devatā standing under an *aśoka* tree (*aśokapushpaprachāyikā mudrā*). Bharhut Stūpa. 2nd cent. B.C. See p. 131.

Fig. 61 Dream of Mahāmāyā and Buddha's descent in her womb as a white elephant (*garbhāvakrānti*). Medallion, Bharhut Stūpa. See p. 131.

Fig. 62 Yaksha, Nāga and Devatā figures on the gateways of Bharhut Stūpa. See pp. 131-2, 135.

a. Kubera Yaksha. North Gate.
b. Chulakokā Devatā. South Gate.
c. Sirimā Devatā.
d. Chakavāka Nāga. South Gate.
e. Supavaso Yakho.

Fig. 63 a. Panel on pillar, showing the scene of King Ajātaśatru visiting the Buddha. Bharhut Stūpa. See p. 132.
b. Panel on pillar, showing Nāgarāja Erāpata kneeling at the foot of the Bodhi tree. Bharhut Stūpa. See p. 132.

Fig. 64 Rail medallions. Bharhut Stūpa.
a. An elephant catch, showing monkeys driving the beast. See p. 132.
b. humorous scene showing monkeys extracting the hair from the nostril of a Mahāyaksha with the help of a giant forceps tucked by an elephant. For the legend of *Gaja-vānara-yuddha* in which monkeys obtained victory over the elephants, see *Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, ch. 253.

Fig. 65 Gaja-Lakshmī standing on lotus, bathed by elephants. 2nd cent. Rail medallion, Bharhut Stūpa. See p. 135.

Fig. 66 Dharmachakra Pillar circumambulated by worshippers. 2nd cent. Rail medallion, Bharhut Stūpa.

Fig. 67 Motifs from Bharhut reliefs. See pp. 141-2.
a.i-ii. *Vrishabha machchha* (fishtailed bull).
b. *Śiṁśumāraśirah*.
c. Lotus rhizome (*kalpalatā*) issuing from the mouth of a pot-bellied Yaksha.
d. Kalpalatā issuing from Yaksha navel.
e. Kalpalatā disposed round a female figure.
f. Band of moving elephants.
g. Band of winged lions.

Fig. 68 Details of Kalpalatā motif from Bharhut reliefs. See p. 142.
a. mango-shaped pendent containers for lac-dye paint.
b-c. jack-fruit-shaped wine containers.

Fig. 69 Ornaments from Bharhut reliefs. See pp. 144, 146.
a. *Prākāravapra kuṇḍala.*
b. Triratna earrings.
c. i, iii. spiral anklets; ii girdles.

Figs. 70-71 Kalpalatā producing ornaments etc. Bharhut reliefs. See p. 146.

Fig. 72 Ornaments and textiles from Bharhut reliefs. See p. 146.
a. a necklace with three pearl strings (*trisara muktāhāra*).
b. six-stringed necklace.
c-d. double triratna necklace pendant.
e. Flat studded chaplet.
f. ear rosettes.
g-h. girdles.
i. scarves.
j. *Dhotī*.

Fig. 73 a. Elephant head serving as peg for hanging ornaments etc. Bharhut relief.
b. Similar. See p. 146.

Fig. 74 Scenes from Bharhut reliefs. See p. 146.
a. *Mahā-Bhūta Yaksha*.
b. Chakra worship.
c. Śrī-Devī inside a band of lotuses.

Fig. 75 w. Toraṇa gateway with section of railing. North Gate. Rear view. Great Stūpa. 1st cent. B. C. Sanchi. See pp. 156-59.
x. Worship of the Dharma-Chakra Pillar. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.
y. Worship of the Dharma-Chakra. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.
z. Fabulous animals. Great Stūpa. Sanchi. (i) *simhamachchha*, (ii) *sapaksha mṛiga*, (iii) *magaramachchha*.

Fig. 75 Gaja-Lakshmī with Dampatī on lotuses. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 76 Śrī-Lakshmī with attendants. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 77 Elephant sporting with lotuses. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 78 *Padmalatā* from the mouth of a tortoise. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 79 Yaksha with *Padmalatā*. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 80 *Padmalatā* from the navel of a Yakshī. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 80 x. Chakra Worship. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 80 y. Chakra-pillar worship. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 168.

Fig. 81 Stūpa with Tree-of-Life (*Śrī-vṛiksha*). Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 169.

Fig. 82 Kalpavṛiksha and *mithuna*. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 169.

Fig. 83 Kinnara-mithuna. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 169.

Fig. 84 Garuḍa and Nāga Conflict. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See p. 169.

Fig. 85 Yakshī on tortoise. Stūpa No. 2. Sanchi. See pp. 168, 169.

Fig. 85 x. Worship of the Chakra Pillar. Stūpa No. III. Sanchi. See p. 170.
y. Worship of the Chakra-Lion Pillar. Stūpa No. III. Sanchi. See p. 170.

Fig. 86 Apsidal Temple. No. 18. Sanchi. See pp. 171-2.

Fig. 87 a. Worship of the Dharmachakra Pillar. 2nd cent. B. C. Bodhgaya. See p. 173.
b. Same.

Fig, 88 A dryad climbing up a tree with help of a Yaksha seated below Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 173.

Fig. 89 Gaja-Lakshmī. Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 173.

Fig. 89 a. Corner railing pillar carved with Śrī-Lakshmī, Dampatī motifs. See p. 173.

Fig. 90 Rail medallion (*paripushkara*). Showing Gandharva Pañchaśikha holding a harp standing outside the Indra-śaila Cave. Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 170.

Fig. 91 Rail medallion. A *mithuna* in adoration standing outside a cave. Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 173.

Fig. 92 A ṛishi seated in front of a *guhā*. Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 173.

Fig. 93 *Jetavana-kraya* scene. Rail medallion. Bodhgaya Stūpa. See p. 173.

Fig. 94 Rail medallions. Showing fabulous animals (*Īhāmṛiga*). Bodhgaya. See pp. 173-4.
a. *Naramachchha* (Fishtailed human being).
b. *Naravyāla*.
c. Winged elephant (*pakshī-gajendra*).
d. Winged horse (*balāhaka aśva*).

Fig. 95 Scene of three elephants attacking a panicky crowd. Bas-relief in the upper verandah. Rāṇīgumphā Cave. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st century B. C. See pp. 177, 180.

Fig. 96 Flight of Udayana-Vāsavadattā. Bas-relief in the upper verandah. Gaṇeshgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st. cent. B. C. See pp. 178-80.

Fig. 97 So-called rape scene. Uncertain identity. Bas-relief in the upper verandah. Rāṇīgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. Ist cent. B. C. See p. 181.

Fig. 98 A Royal hunting scene identified with Dushyanta-Śakuntalā story. Rāṇīgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 181.

Fig. 99 Rail-design between the inter spaces of springing arches. Rāṇīgumphā, Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st century B. C. See p. 182.

Fig. 100 Lotus creeper carved on the arch. Gaṇeshgumphā. Orissa. 1st century B. C. See p. 182.

Fig. 101 Scythian soldier (*kuntadhāraka rājamānusha*). Upper verandah. Rāṇī-gumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 182.

Fig. 102 Kalpalatā with jack-fruit shaped containers. Rāṇīgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 182.

Fig. 103 Capture of elephants by monkeys. Probably a seen from the folk story of *Gajavānara saṅgrāma*. Rāṇīgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 182.

Fig. 104 Monkey as mock-ascetic. Same. See p. 182.

Fig. 105 Woman riding on bull (*vṛishavāhinī*). Same. See p. 182.

Fig. 106 Plan of Gaṇeshgumphā. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 183.

Fig. 107 Vyāghragumphā. Frontal view. Udaigiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 183.

Fig. 108 Plan of Anantagumphā. Khaṇḍagiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B.C. See p. 184.

Fig. 109 Gaja-Lakshmī. Anantagumphā. Khaṇḍagiri Hills, Orissa. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 184.

Fig. 110 Plan of a rock-cut chaitya-ghara, showing colonnade (*stambhamālā*), nave (*nābhi* or *maṇḍapa*), stūpa and path of circumambulation (*pradakshiṇā-patha*). Conjectural. See p. 187.

Fig. 111 Cross-section of the vaulted roof (*gajaprishṭa*) with wooden ribs, inside a chaitya-ghara. Conjectural. See p. 187.

Fig. 112 Plan of the inside of a Brahmanical temple showing *maṇḍapa, garbhagriha*, pillars, outer and inner circumambulation. Similar to a chaitya-ghara. Conjectural. See p. 188.

Fig. 113 Plan of a typical rockcut *vihāra* i.e. Buddhist monastery. Conjectural. See p. 189.

Fig. 114 Chakravartī king Māndhātā with parasol and flywhisk, riding in a chariot, passing over the bodies of Asuras, in the Uttarakuru country. Up to now identified as Sūrya. Rock-cut Vihāra. Bhājā. 2nd cent. B. C. See below, and pp. 191-2.

Fig. 115 Chakravartī king Māndhātā in the grove of Uttarakuru country, with Kalpavṛikshas. Up to now identified as Indra. Same. See above, and pp. 191-2.

Fig. 116 Façade and interior view. Chaitya Hall. Bhaja. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 193.

Fig. 117 Ground plan of the Chaityaghara. Kondāne. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 194.

Fig. 118 a-b. Atlante dwarfs (*kiṅkara* or *guhyaka*). Pītalkhorā. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 196.
c. Dwarf yaksha carrying Śivaliṅgam.

Fig. 119 Gaja-Lakshmī. Cave 4. Pītalkhorā. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 196.

Fig. 120 Vedikā pattern on the architrave. Vihāra No. 9. Pītalkhorā. See p. 197.

Fig. 121 Stūpa inside Chaitya-hall No 10. Ajaṅta. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 198.

Fig. 122 Kīrtimukha or Chaitya-window. Chaitya-hall No. 9. Ajanta. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 198.

Fig. 123 Outside view. Pāṇḍuleṇa Chaitya-hall. Nasik. Middle of 1st cent. B. C. See pp. 202-3.

Fig. 124 Chaitya-mukha showing Nāga-Garuḍa and Śrī-Lakshmī. Mānmoda Chaitya-hall. Junnar. See pp. 203-4.

Fig. 125 a. Chaitya-mukha with Kīrtistambha in front. Chaitya-hall. Karle. See pp. 206-7.
b. Close-up of the above, showing details of Chaitya window.

Fig. 126 Decorated dwarf rail. Kanheri. 2nd cent. A. D. See pp. 210-11.

Fig. 127 Plan of the Chaitya-hall. Kanheri. 2nd cent. A. D. See p. 211.

Fig. 128 Elephant riders. Railing cross-bar. Kankali Tila, Mathura. Śuṅga. See p. 219.

Fig. 129 Tympanum showing earliest form of Stūpa at Mathura. Kankali Tila, Mathura. See p. 220.

Fig. 130 Stūpa carved on the Loṇaśobhikā Āyāgapaṭṭa. Mathura. 1st cent. A. D. See p. 220.

Fig. 131 Stūpa on an architrave, No. M 3. Mathura. 1st cent. A. D. See. p. 220.

Figs. 132 a-c. Fabulous animals on railing roundels. Kankali Tila, Mathura, See p. 222.

Figs. 133 a-b. Lotus creeper on railing upright and coping. Kankali Tila, Mathura. See p. 222.

Fig. 134 Woman drying her hair. Railing pillar. Mathura. 2nd cent. A. D. See p. 227.

Figs. 135 a-b. Woman with parrot. Railing pillars. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 227.

Figs. 136 a-c. & 137 a-c. Railing pillars showing female beauties in various poses. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 227-8.

Fig. 138 Buddhist subjects on railing pillars. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 228-9.

a. Ṛishya-śṛiṅga Jātaka.

b. Bodhisattva with scalloped halo round the head.

c. Dharmachakra on pedestal.

Fig. 139 Railing pillars with carved scenes. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 228-29.

a. Woman pressing her breast.

b. Śrī-Lakshmī in milk-giving pose. Pre-Kushāṇa.

c-d. Woman with lamp.

e. Palace amusement. Showing Dance.

f. Palace amusement. Drinking scene.

g. Palace amusement. Coiffure of the lady by her lover.

h. Palace amusement. Dance.

Fig. 140 Chakra-paṭa. Mathura. 1st cent. A. D. See p. 232.

Fig. 141 Svastika-paṭa. Mathura. 1st cent. A. D. See p. 232.

Fig. 142 Tīrthaṅkara-paṭa. 1st cent. A. D. See p. 233.

Fig. 143 Tīrthaṅkara seated in *padmāsana*. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 234.

Fig. 144 Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra. Kaṅkali Tila, Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 234.

Fig. 145 Balarāma. Junsuṭi, Mathura. Late 2nd cent. B. C. See pp. 235, 256.

Fig. 146 a. Bodhisattva. Sarnath. Inscribed in year 3 of Kanishka. See p. 241.

Fig. 146 b. Bodhisattva. Maholi, Mathura. Inscribed in Year 92. Kushāṇa. See p. 241.

Fig. 147 Bodhisattva in padmāsana. Katrā, Mathura. Inscribed. Kushāṇa. See pp. 241, 242-3.

Fig. 147 a. Bodhisattva in padmāsana. Anyor, Mathura. Inscribed. Kushāṇa. See p. 241.

Fig. 148 Seated figures (taken as the Buddha by some scholars) on coins. See pp. 241-2.

a. From a coin of Azes.

b. From a coin of Maues.

c. From a coin of Vema Kadphises.

Fig. 149 Buddha figures from Kanishka's coins.
a. Seated. See pp. 241-2.
b. Standing, haloed. Labelled as *BODDO*.

Fig. 149 a. Bodhisattva Maitreya. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 244.

Fig. 150 Kāśyapa Buddha. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 244.

Fig. 151 Hellenistic motifs in Kushāṇa art of Mathura. See pp. 244-45.
a. Heracles fighting the Nemean Lion.
b. Rape of Ganymede.
c. Garland-bearing Erotes.
d. Vine leaves.
d. Corinthian Capital.

Fig. 152 Bodhisattva with amulet. Gaṇesrā village, Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 245.

Fig. 153 Bacchus-Kubera. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 247.

Fig. 154 a. Bacchanalian Group. Pālīkherā, Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 247.

Fig. 154 b. Bacchanalian Group. Maholi, Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 247.
i. Obverse. ii. Reverse.

Fig. 155 Nāga image. Chhargaon vil., Mathura. See p. 248.

Fig. 156 Balarāma with cup and garland. Kukargām vil., Mathura. See p. 248.

Fig. 157 Stone Statue of Vema. Headless. Enthroned. From Māṭ Devakula, Mathura. 1st century A.D. See p. 249.

Fig. 158 Stone Statue of Kanishka. Headless. Standing. From Māṭ Devakula, Mathura. 1st cent. A.D. See pp. 249-50.

Fig. 159 A headless torso. Labelled as *Shastana*. Most probably showing Śaka-Satrap Chashṭana. From Māṭ Devakula, Mathura. Early 2nd cent. A.D. See p. 250.

Fig, 160 Head with conical hat. Kushāṇa period. From Mathura. Now in the Budapest Museum, Leiden. See pp. 250-1.

Fig. 161-3 Heads with a helmet with two ram's horns. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 251.
Fig. 161 Mus. No. 2564. Ht. 9″.
Fig. 162 Mus. No. 157.
Fig. 163 From the Indo-Persian Lion-capital, Mathura.

Fig. 164 a-b. Ram's horns as emblems of "Iranian Majesty". From Herzfeld, *Kushano-Sassanian Coins*, p. 22.

Fig. 165 a. Nārāyaṇa Vāṭaka. A general view showing ruins of the stupendous stone railing (*prākāra*). Ghosūṇḍi, Nagari near Chittor. 1st-2nd cent. B. C. See p. 252.

b. Elevation and section of the stone railing. Same.

Figs. 166-7 Two male torsos. Perhaps Vṛishṇi heroes. From Mora, Mathura. 1st cent. B. C. See p. 253.

Fig. 168 Brahmā. With three faces and a haloed superimposed bust at the back. Kushāṇa. Mathura Museum No. 382. See p. 254.

Fig. 169 Brahmā. With three visible faces and the right hand held in *abhaya* pose. Mathura. Gupta Period. See p. 254.

Fig. 170 Vishṇu with four hands. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 255.

Fig. 171 Nṛisiṁha-Varāha-Vishṇu. Mathura. Gupta Period. See p. 255.

Fig. 172 Śiva represented by a plain Liṅga. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 257.

Fig. 173 Ekamukhī Śiva-Liṅga. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 257.

Fig. 174 Five-faced Śiva-Liṅga. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 257.

Fig. 175 Nandikeśvara Śiva standing against the Nandī Bull. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 257.

Fig. 176 Śiva-Pārvatī. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 257.

Fig. 177 Ardhanārīśvara. With three other Brāhmanical deities Vishṇu, Gaja-Lakshmī and Brahmā. Mathura. Kushāna. See p. 257.

Fig. 178 Sūrya as Kushāna Emperor, clad in the Northern dress. Mathura. Kushāna. See p. 258.

Fig. 179 Kārttikeya with spear. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 258-9.

Fig. 180 Pañchendra form of Indra. Fragmented. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 259.

Fig. 181 Vajrapāṇi Indra Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 259.

Fig. 182 Kubera with Lakshmī and Hārītī as his two consorts. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 260.

Fig. 183 Mahishamardinī Durgā. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 260.

Fig. 184 Saptamātṛikās in a group. With Kārttikeya on left. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

Fig. 185 Ground-plan of the Dharmarājikā Stūpa. Taxila, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 263.

Fig. 186 Standing Buddha. Hashtanagar, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa See p. 264.

Fig. 187 Hārītī. Sahri-bahlol, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 264.

Fig. 188 The Preaching Buddha seated on a lous-throne supported by two elephants. Sahri-bahlol, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See pp. 164-5.

Fig. 189 Buddha's Parinirvāṇa. Sahri-bahlol, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 264.

Fig. 190 Conversion of Kāśyapas. Sahri-bahlol, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 264.

Fig. 191 Copper reliquary of Kanishka showing Buddha on the lid and Buddhas etc. on the cylinder. Inscribed. From Shah-ji-ki-dheri, Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See 265.

Fig. 192 Ivory carvings from Begram. 2nd-3rd cent. A. D. See p. 266.

a. Lady with parrot.
b. Female attendant.
c. Woman coxing a Haṁsa with a lotus.
d. Toilet.
e-f. Birds.
g. Lady wearing a heavy necklace.
h. Pūrṇaghaṭa.
i. Flying Haṁsas.
j. Śalākā-vātāyana as *padmavaravedikā*.

Fig. 193 Ivory carvings from Begram. 2nd-3rd cent. A. D. See p. 266.

a. Lady playing on flute.
b. Dance.
c. Detail of a Torṇa-gate showing stūpa worshipped by elephants.

Fig. 194 Colossal Buddha. Standing (8′ 8″). Sahri-bahlol, Gandhāra. See p. 273.

Fig. 195 Graeco-Roman motifs in Gandhāra art.

a. Garland-bearing cupids.
b. Corinthian capital.
c. Garuḍa and Ganymede.

Fig. 1 6 Pañchika, seated in European fashion. Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 274.

Fig. 197 Hārītī. Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 274.

Fig. 198 Śālabhañjikā. Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 274.

Fig. 199 Atlas figure. Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See p. 274.

Fig. 200 Athena-Roma. Helmeted. Holding a spear. Lahore Museum. Gandhāra. Kushāṇa. See pp. 274-5.

Fig. 201 Helmeted figure of Roma holding spear. From Huvishka's coin. See p. 275.

Fig. 202 View of the rock-cut Chaitya-Hall. Guntapalle. 2nd cent. B. C. See p. 279.

Fig. 203 Chaitya-paṭa. From Goli Stūpa. 2nd cent. A.D. See p. 280.

Fig. 204 Reliefs from Jaggayypeta Stūpa. 2nd cent. B.C. See p. 282-3.
a. Showing the Puṇyaśālā.
b. Chakravartī Māndhātā.

Fig. 205 Conjectural restoration of the Great Stūpa. Amaravati. See pp. 286-7. After Barret, *Amaravati Sculptures in the B. M.*, p. 28,

Fig. 206 Garland-bearing figures. Amaravati Stūpa. See p. 287.

Fig. 207 Yakshī before a *Makara-mukha*. Amaravati. Early period. See pp. 287, 291.

Fig. 208 *Stūpapaṭa* showing earlier form of the Great Stūpa. Early Period. See p. 288.

Fig. 209 *Stūpapaṭa* showing form of the fully evolved stūpa. Amaravati. See p. 288.

Fig. 210 Elephant-headed Yaksha figure. Early Period. Amaravati. See p. 289.

Fig. 211 Winged animals. From Amaravati reliefs. Early Phase. See p. 289.
a. lion ; b. griffin ; c. stag.

Fig. 212 a. Bell motif as border design. Amaravati. See p. 289.
b. Chakra-pillar. Amaravati. See p. 289.

Figs. 213 a-c. Makara and lolus creeper. Amaravati. Early Period. See p. 291.

Fig. 214 Confusion created by elephant in Rājgṛiha streets. Third Period. Amaravati. See p. 293.

Fig. 215 Angry Udayana. Third Phase. Amaravati. See p. 293.

Figs. 215 a-b. Kokilakeśapāśa. A distinguished coiffure. Amaravati. See p. 295.

Fig. 217 Ground plan of the Great Stūpa. Nagarjunikonda. See pp. 299, 300.

Fig. 218 Elevational view of the ruins. Great Stūpa. Nagarjunikonda. See pp. 299, 300.

Figs. 219-20 Gold Medallions stamped with human heads. From reliefs of Stūpa 6. Nagarjunikonda. See pp. 301-2.

Fig. 221 Stūpa-shaped relic-casket. From Stūpa 8. Nagarjunikonda. See p. 302.

Fig. 222 Map showing the citadel and surroundings. Nagarjunikonda. From *Indian Archaeology—a review*, 1957-8, pp. 7-8. See pp. 302-3.

Fig. 223 Descent of the Buddha as elephant from heaven. From sculpture, Nagarjunikonda. See p. 304,

Fig. 223 a. Buddha's Throne and Dharmachakra pillar. Nagarjunikonda relief.

Fig. 224 Laughing boy. Terracotta. Patna. Maurya. See pp. 309-10.

Fig. 225 Laughing girl. Terracotta. Patna. Maurya. See pp. 309-10.

Fig. 226 Dancing girl. Terracotta. Patna. Maurya. See pp. 309-10.

Fig. 227 Female figure with elaborate headdress. Terracotta. Patna Mus. Maurya. See p. 310.

Fig. 228 Female torso. Terracotta. Golakhpur, Patna. Maurya. See p. 310.

Fig. 229 Winged Figure. Terracotta. Basarh. Śunga. See pp. 310-11.

Fig. 230 Winged Figure. Terracotta. From Kosam, Allahabad Mus. Śunga. See p. 311.

Fig. 231 Man and Woman. Bacchanalian scene. Terracotta plaque. From Kosam, Allahabad Mus. Śuṅga. See p. 311.

Fig. 232 Female Beauty identified as Śrī-Lakshmī. Terracotta. From Kaushāmbī. Now in Indian Institute, Oxford. Śuṅga. See p. 312.

Fig. 233 Mithuna. Terracotta plaque. Kosam. Śuṅga. See p. 312.

Fig. 234 Mithuna. Terracotta plaque. Ahichchhatra. Śuṅga. See p. 313.

Fig. 235 Female goddess. Terracotta. Mathura. Maurya. See p. 314.

Fig. 236 Female goddess. Terracotta. Mathura. Maurya. See p. 314.

Fig. 237 a-b. Male heads with foreign features. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa or Śaka. See p. 315.

Figs. 338-9 Elephant figures. Terracotta. Mathura. Maurya-Śuṅga. See p. 315.

Fig. 240 Bull. Terracotta. Ahichchhatra. Śuṅga. See. p. 315.

Fig. 241 Kāmadeva standing on Śūrpaka. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 316.

Fig. 242 Nāgī. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 316.

Figs. 243-44 Kubera and Hārītī. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 316.

Fig. 245 Vasudhārā. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 316.

Fig. 246 Nude dwarf. Terracotta. Mathura. Kushāṇa. See p. 316.

Figs. 247-8 Bull. Horse. Terracotta. Kondapur. Sātavāhana. See p. 317.

Fig. 249 Pūrṇa Kumbha. Sanchi Gateway.

Fig. 250 Back of the Fig. 139 b, showing various symbols.

Fig. 251 Pūrṇa Kumbha. Amaravati relief.

LIST OF THE HALF-TONE PLATES

I. The Harappā Citadel : the north-west corner during excavation.

II. View from the northern end of the Harappā Citadel looking towards the working-platforms and the old river bed.

III-XV. Representative seals from Harappā, Mohenjo-daro and Lothal.

XVI. Silver vase with lid. No. DK 1341. Mohenjo-daro.

XVII. Bronze buffalo. Mohenjo-daro.

XVIII. Bronze goat. Mohenjo-daro.

XIX. Bronze dancer. Mohenjo-daro.

XX. Crude Bronze girl. Front. Mohenjo-daro.

XXI. Same. Back.

XXII-XXIII. Two copper statuettes in round. Mohenjo-daro.

XXIV. Copper spear-head. Mohenjo-daro.

XXV. Copper dog. Lothal.

XXVI-XXX. Group of stone objects. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXII. Faience monkey. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXIII. Mother with children. Terracotta. Harappa.

XXXIV. Seated terracotta figure. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXV. Ring-stone and other objects. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXVI. Chess-man like stone object. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXVII. Faience ram. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXVIII. Terracotta crouching monkey. Mohenjo-daro.

XXXIX. Terracotta mother goddess. Mohenjo-daro.

XL. Stone gratings. Mohenjo-daro.

XLI. Terracotta female bust with the cup-like feature attached to the left of the head. Mohenjo-daro.

XLII. Terracotta bust. Frofile. Zhob.

XLIII. Same. Front.

XLIV-V. Painted pot-sherds. Mohenjo-daro.

XLVI. Pottery design. Harappa.

XLVII. Ancient punch-marked coins with punched symbols. 4-5th cent. B. C.

XLVIII. Banyan capital. From Besnagar. 3rd cent. B. C. IMC.

IL. Tripartite Yaksha. From Rajghat. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan. 3rd cent. B.C.

L. Barrel-shaped ring-stone. Negative. From Rajghat. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan. 4th-3rd cent. B. C.

LI. Same. Positive.

LII. Wooden palisade. Bulandibāgh, Patna. C. latter part of 4th century B. C.

LIII. Polished pedestal of a capital. Rāmpurwā. 3rd cent. B. C.

LIV. Rāmpurwā Bull Capital. 3rd cent. B. C.

LV. Lion Capital. Sarnath. 3rd cent. B. C.

LVI. Close-up view of the Facade. Lomas Rishi Cave. Barabar Hills. 3rd cent. B. C.

LVII. Stone head. Pataliputra. 3rd cent. B. C.

LVIII. Yaksha statue. From near Bombay. 3rd cent. B. C.

LIX. Yakshī statue from Mehrauli, near Delhi. Buff-coloured sandstone. 3rd-2nd cent. B. C.

LX. Domukhī Devī. Yakshī statue. Front view from west. 2nd cent. B.C.

LXI. Vajrāsana Throne. Bodhgaya temple. 3rd cent. B. C.

LXII. Stone railing. Pataliputra. 3rd cent. B. C.

LXIII. Reconstructed railing of the Mathura Jaina Devanirmita Stūpa. See pp. 218 ff. Inside Lucknow Museum.

LXIV. Stone railing. Bodhgaya. 2nd-1st cent. B. C.

LXV. Reconstructed Stone Railing of the Bharhut Stūpa. Inside Indian Museum, Calcutta. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXVI. Laughing boy. Terracotta. Patna. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXVII. Terracotta female figure. Bulandibāgh. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXVIII. Terracotta Mother Goddess. Mathura.

LXIX. Terracotta female torso. Golakhpur. C. 200 B. C.

LXX. Sudarśanā Yakshī. From Bharhut Stūpa. Now Ind. Mus.

LXXI. Chulakokā Devatā. Railing Pillar. From Bharhut Stūpa. Now National Mus.

LXXII. Fragmentary pillar showing an acrobatic scene. From Bharhut Stūpa. Now Allahabad Municipal Museum.

LXXIII-IV. Rail medallions. From Bharhut.

LXXV. Left Pillar. East Gate. South face. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.

LXXVI. Right Pillar. South Gate. East face. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.

LXXVII. Architraves. Eastern Gateway. View from north-east. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.

LXXVIII. Gateway. View looking south after restoration of the Stūpa behind. Stūpa III. Sanchi.

LXXIX. Capital of West Gateway, showing figures of dwarfs. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.

LXXX. Panel showing lions. Lowest of the right pillar. West Gate. Front view. Great Stūpa. Sanchi.

LXXXI. Bull Terracotta. From Kosam. Śuṅga.

LXXXII. Female bust. Terracotta. Hastināpur (Period III).

LXXXIII-IV. Māndhātā in Uttarakuru. Bhājā. 2nd cent. B. C. For identification of the reliefs see pp. 191-2.

LXXXV. Sculptures on northern wall of ornamented Vihāra No. 20. From South. Bhaja. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXXXVI. First sculpture from north in the wall of the verandah facing west. Vihāra No. 20. Bhaja, Poona. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXXXVII. Showing perforated window and warrior. Verandah. On the wall, facing west. Vihāra No. 20. Bhaja, Poona. 2nd cent. B. C.

LXXXVIII. Arched entrance and the facade with lion-capitalled pillar from west. Chaitya Cave. Karle, Poona. 1st cent. B. C.

LXXXIX. Carved friezes. Upper Verandah. Rāṇīgumphā. Udaigiri. 1st cent. B.C.

XC. Bull rider. Mathura. Pre-Kushāṇa.

XCI. Yaksha blowing a conch. Mathura. Pre-Kuṣhāṇa.

XCII-XCIII. Two human torsos. Probobly two of the Five Vṛishṇi Heroes. From Mora, Mathura. 1st cent. B. C.

XCIV. Male head. From Mathura. Now in the Budapest Museum. Kushāṇa.

XCV. Female syrinx-player. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

XCVI. Female bust (Ht. 14. cm.). Mathura. Bejoy Singh Nahar Collection. Ind. Mus. Kushāṇa.

XCVII. Mithuna couple. From Mathura. Patna Mus. Kushāṇa.

XCVIII. Male head. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

IC. Lady coaxing a parrot. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

C. Female bust. From Mathura Dt. Now in Boston Museum. Kushāṇa or earlier.

CI-CIV. Toraṇa architraves. Buddhist. Mus. No. M3. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CV. Fragment of a frieze showing garland bearers above and some ascetic story below. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CVI. Railing pillar carved with a boy identified as Ṛishyaśṛiṅga. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CVII-CXI. Architectural fragments with carvings. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CXII. Standing Bodhisattva. Inscribed in Kanishka's reign. From Set-Mahet. Now in Ind. Mus.

CXIII. Standing Bodhisattva. Inscribed in the 2nd year of Kanishka's reign. From Kosam. Allahabad Museum. 79 or 121 A. D.

CXIV. Seated Bodhisattva. Inscribed. From Katra, Mathura. Kushāṇa. See pp. 242-4.

CXV. Durgā, seated on lion. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CXVI. Kubera with his two consorts, Lakshmī and Hārītī. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CXVII. Rape of Ganymede. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CXVIII. Aśoka tree. Mathura. Kushāṇa.

CXIX. Railing cross-bar medallion. Mathura. Kushāṇa. Now Boston Museum.

CXX-CXXII. Silver dishes. From somewhere in the North-West. CXXII. in Svetislav Roerich Collection.

CXXIII. Silver dish representing India. From Lampsacos; now in the Istanbul Museum. 2nd cent. A. D. Courtesy : Museum of Antiquities, Istanbul.

CXXIV-V. Jewellery. From Taxila. Nos. 247, 249.

CXXVI. Buddha with worshippers. From Takht-i-Bahai. Peshawar Mus.

CXXVII. Gautama fasting as Bodhisattva. From Sikri. Lahore Mus.

CXXVIII. Siddhārta with an ascetic and Vajrapāṇi. Gandhāra. Peshawar Mus.

CXXIX-CXXXI. Heads from Gandhara. Stucco. 4-5th cent. A. D.

CXXXII. Bodhisattva Maitreya. Gandhara. Stucco. 5th cent. A. D.

CXXXIII. Ornamented Buddha-pada. Amaravati. Early Period. Courtesy : British Mus.

CXXXIV. Pūrṇa Ghaṭa slab. Amaravati. Early Period.

CXXXV. Sculptured scene on part of railing pillar. Amaravati. Second Period. Courtesy : British Mus.

CXXXVI. Male colossal Bust. More than life-size. Nagarjunikonda. 3rd-4th cent. A. D.

CXXXVII. Female Bust. Nagarjunikonda. 3rd-4th cent. A. D.

CXXXVIII. Yakshī figure. Nagarjunikonda.

CXXXIX. Worship of Buddha-throne and Dharmachakra. Nagarjunikonda.

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GENERAL INDEX TO IMPORTANT WORDS AND SUBJECTS

Abdamāla, abātamālā (=*abjamālā*) 285, 289
Ābharaṇavṛiksha 192
Abhayamudrā see *mudrā*
Abhyūshakhādikā 225
Āchārya 297, 298
Aesthetic,
appreciation :
common both to poetry and art 3
Rasa, Artha, Chhanda, Śabda 3
Rasa, flavour, divine element in creation and art 3
Rasa, aggregate of human emotions 3
Artha, meaning or theme, as the vehicle of *Rasa* 3, 5,
Chhanda, Tāla, Laya, rhythm, *Mātrā*, measure 3, 4
Śabda, word, for poetry 3, 4
—Rūpa, for art, as vehicle of ideas 3, 7
Rūpa, a material medium 3, 4, 5, 7
—makes an appeal to the mind through the senses 4
—its language direct 4
—Unity of Form and Meaning, *Vāgartha*, 7, 47, 54-5
Bhāva, Bhāvanā, 3, 7
Adhyātma-bhāva, Brahma-bhāvanā, Karma-bhāvanā, Ubhaya-bhāvanā 7
Mānushī Śilpa and *Deva Śilpa* 4
Amūrta unmanifest and *Mūrta* manifest 7
Arūpa or *Paramarūpa* and *Rūpa* 7
Viśvarūpa=mūrtarūpa 7
Dhyāna, meditation 4, 7
Art is mind made manifest in matter 4
Image, not so much objective as through artist's mind 4
Chitta 7, 55
Cosmos presenting a measured model for the artist's mind 4
Connoisseur, *Rasika, Sahṛidaya, Vichakshaṇa* 4, 7, 55
aesthetic shock, *saṁvega* 4
mādhurya, sweetness 307
Dassanīya and *Saṁvejanīya* 147
Yoniso padahanti 147
attharasascha labhino 147
purpose :
śobhanārtha, beautifying 55
ārakshaṇārtha, apotropaic 23, 55
chilathitike, perpetuating 89.
symbolical 4, see Symbols
artistic allusion 60
Saṁpuṇjana, composition 4
Ākhyāna 147
Chitra 147
lasatīva cha bhūlambaḥ 307
Āḍaṁbara 57
Ādāsa (*ādarśa*), mirror 58, 223
Ādāsagāhakā devā 125
Adbhuta=Yaksha, 116
Adhṛishya 117
Aditi 24, 5, 49
Agate, *lekhāśma, galvark, hakīk* 29
Āghāṭi 57
Agni 45, 259
Agniskandha 46, 120, 293
Agni-Soma 46
Āhava 41
Ahirbudhnya 48
Ajakālako Yakho 134

Ājāneya, see *Mahā ājāneya*
Ājānubāhu 239
Aksha, axle 41
Alaka, alakāvali 318
Alambusā 136
Alasā, Alasakanyā 229
Amareśvara Śiva 283
Amatra 41
Ambhovihāra 226
Ambikā 34, 45, 49
Amritaghaṭa 244, 259
Ananta 46, 48
—*śāyī* 49
Anantagumphā 184
Anasa, cart 41
Anekavaktraka, with many mouths 72
Āndhra-Sātavāhana 277 f.
Aṅgajarūpa 71
Anihata 115
Añjalipaggahā 300, 301
Aṅkuśa, goad 312
Anotatta (Anavatapta) 60, 90
Antarikshachara 88
Antarvedi 55
Āpānagoshṭhī 249
Āpānakamadhya-pravishṭa-rakta-mūlaka 312
Aparājita 116
Aparamahāvinaseliya 297, 298
Aparaseliya, Avaraseliya 278, 298
Apsarasas, nymphs 7, 45, 135-6
Alambusā, Miśrakeśī, Subhadrā, Sudarśanā 135
Apūpa 46, 49
Ara, spoke 41
Araṇi 46
Archā, image 5
architect, *vāstuvidyāchārya* 59, 109, *mahāvaḍḍhaki* 59, *selavaḍḍhaki* 298, 186, *Mahāsilākammāntika* 187, *viśvakarmā* 40, *sthapati* 56, 109, *rājatakshā*
his science, *vaththu* 3, *vāstuveda* 57, *vāstuvidyā* 58, 65, *vasthukamma* 58
his work, *kamma, selakamma* 59, 186, 187, *navakamma* 298
superintendent of work, *navakarmika* 285, 298, *mahānavakarmika* 285
Architecture,
—material rich in Pali literature 62 f.
—some interesting terms from Jaina Āgama literature 67
rock-cut, see *chaitya, vihāra, cave*
āchchhādana, encasing 120 ; *śilā-kañchuka*
āditala, ground floor 63 ; *tala*
aggalā, transverse bar 64, 64
aggalāpāsāya 66
phusitaggala 64
agniguhā 47
agniśālā 42, 43, 161
āhāramaṇḍapa 63
ajira 42, 210
akhkhāḍaga, stage 67
ākrīḍa, stadium or arena 303 ; also called *akshavāṭaka* or *mallaśālā*, at Nagarjunikonda
ākāśatala, top-floor 63 ; see tala
aksha, outlet for smoke in roof 44 ; see *dhūmanetra*
akshavāṭaka, arena 303 ; see *ākrīḍa*
ālambanapiṇḍikā 127
alinda, alindā, entrance hall 62, 298 ; see *dvārakoshṭhaka*
alpeśākhya, small Stūpa 92, 120, 290, 301; see *maheśākhya*
āmalakaśilā, crowning stone on Śikhara 122
anekastambhaśata-sannivishṭa, theatre hall supported on many columns 67

aṇḍa, drum or abacus of a pillar-capital 98, 100

aṇḍa, hemispherical dome of stūpa 126, 208

aṅgaṇa, courtyard 42, 62; also *prāṅgaṇa* 210, *ajira* 42, 210

aṇīdvāra, small door 67; also *uttarapāsaga* 67

antarāla-maṇḍapa 207

antepura, inner apartment 42, 62; also *patnīsadana* 42, 43

antepurikā, see above

apavaraka 186, see *ovaraka*

apsidal, see *besara*

ārāma, garden 249

ardhachandra, apsidal 313; see *besara*

āsanapeḍhi, *āsana-piḍha*, *āsana-pīṭhikā*, *āsana-peṇḍikā*,-*piṇḍika*, podium 210, 175

assembly hall 18-9, 42, 62, 63, 67, 85, 86, 87-8, 103

āsthānamaṇḍapa, assembly hall; *sabhā*, *saṁthāgāra*, *sadas*, *āsthāyikā*, darbar-i-am (*bahirāsthāna-maṇḍapa*); see *Chandragupta sabhā* 86, at Kumrahar 86, *Sudharmāsabhā*.

aśvathara 211, see *thara*

assasālā, *aśvāsthāna-maṇḍapa*, stable for horses 62, 63

aśvavatī śālā 44

aṭṭālaka, bastion or tower 17, 19, 61, 66, 68, 75, 84

aṭṭhaṁsika, octagon 62, 130, 131, 183, 184, 204, 288

āvattaṇapeḍhiyā, hinges 67

āvesina, stone mason 149, 298

āyāga (=*āryaka*) 231

āyāgapaṭṭa, tablet of homage 159, 232, 233, 234, 231, 266, 288

āyakakhambha 126, 231, 280, 282, 285, 288, 299

āyaka 285, 288, 289, 290, 292

āyaka platform 299, 300; —*mañcha*; see *mañjūshā*; *dakhināyaka* 285, 288, *uttarāyaka* 285, 288

āyāma 43

ayasthūṇa, iron column 42, 58, 109

bahirdvārakoshṭhaka 62; see *alinda*

bahirdvāraśālā 63; see *alinda*

bahirāsthānamaṇḍapa 63; see *āsthānamaṇḍapa*

bahut-thambhaka 63

balainḍā (=*baladaṇḍa*), central beam 44

Barabar caves 92-3

barhaṇa, straw 43

barhirāstaraṇa, layer of straw 43

bath, Great Bath, Indus Valley 19

battlement 66, 73, 84, 131; see *kapiśīrshaka*

besara (=*dvyasra*), apsidal 171-2, 213

bhārapaṭṭa, entablature 194

bhāratulā 63

bhavanodyāna 85; also *grihodyāna* 63

bhicha, wall 90, 127

bhitti, wall 67; see *pakkha*

bhittiguliyā 67

bhittipāda, dado 67

bhojana-śālā 204

bhūmi, storey; *bhūmika* 63, *ekabhūmika*, *dvibhūmika* 63, 175, *tribhūmika*, *navabhūmika* 63

bichhāvana, layers of straw 43; also *aṭakana* or *phiṭakārī*.

bodhighara 63, 64, 65, 133

bodhi-maṇḍa 172, 243

bodhi tree 172, 212, 298; *bodhidruma*, *bodhirukkhapāsāda* 298

Bodhivihāra, *Bodhisaṅghārāma* 172

brick 17, 18, 57, 59, 63, 76, 128, 150, 320-3, see *ishṭakā*
manufacture of, 57
brick temples 320-3
brick tower 76
bṛihat-māna 42
Buddhist rock-cut architecture 186-215 ; see rock-cut archi.
burial mounds, Lauriā Nandangarh 76-7, 206
—square and round, in Ś B. 124
capital : Aśokan 97-130, 171
chakra 52, 54, 100, 141
animal 19-130, 141, 171, 184, 251; see *saṁghāṭa.*
Garuḍa 141, 251
makara 107
Corinthian 245, 274
Doric 274
Ionic 274
so-called *bell* 99, 105-6
pūrṇaghaṭa or *kumbhaka* 68, 99-100, 104, 105-7, 141, 184, 203, 211, 215
Iranian or Persepolitan 105-6, 107, 108
lotus 184
palm 141
cave, defined 187 ; *kubhā, ghara, guhā, śailaguhā, gumphā, leṇa, kīrti, nisīdiyā,* etc. ; Indraśaila 76, Saptaparṇī 76, Barabar 92-3, Orissa 175-85 ; see *Chaitya*-hall, *vihāra, kīrti.*
Chaitya, *stūpa* or tumulus 119, 187, 208, 212
—tree 119 ; also *chaitya-vṛiksha, śmaśāna-chaitya* 77
—cave,— hall,—*ghara,* —*maṇḍapa* etc. 186-7, 188, see below
—apsidal 171-2, 188, 190, 192-3, 194, 195-215, 278, 279-80, 282, 297 ; see *besara*
—circular (*parimaṇḍala*) 203-4, 278-79
—square (*āyata*) 203, 205
—compared to a Hindu temple 188
—stambha,—skambha 187, 205, 206-7, see *kīrtistambha*
—*yūpa* 77, 119
—window 187, 190, 196, 200, 202, 206, 208, 213, 214, see *kīrtimukha*
chakkalikā 65
chakradhvaja 52, 54, 100, 233
chakravāla 98
chaṅkrama, promenade 174
chanda, half rosette 211
Chandragupta Sabhā 86
chandraśālā ,—śālikā 65, 67
chandraśilā, moon-stone 288
chashāla 52
chediyasa chhata, parasol of a *chaitya* 285 ; see *chhatra*
chatuḥ-śāla 252 (—*toraṇavedikā*), (—*parigahitaṁ sela-maṇṭava*) 297, 298
chetiya (= *chaitya*) 124 ; see *mahāchetiya*
chetiyaghara 298 ; see *chaitya-ghara*
chetiyāvaṭṭa (= *chaityāvarta*), paraphernalia round a *stūpa* 124, 302
chhaṭa, parasol 285
chhata 64, see roof
chhatra, parasol, *chhatrakamma, chhatrāvalī, dhātu-chhatra,* 34, 122, 127, 152, 166, 176, 194, 205, 209, 214, 220, 239, 243, 300, 301, 333
—three, *mānusha, divya* and *vimukti* 300
chhatrākāra, umbrella shaped 279
chheḍā, door-post 66
chūḍā, tenon of upright 127
chullī, sidesocket hole 127
city, *nagara, pur, pura,* 17, 19, 47, 58, 61, 66, 75 f., 84-6, 103

city-gates, 67, see *Gopura* ; for city-wall, see *pākāra.*
City of Hills, Girivraja 75, 76
"College Building" 18
Cyclopean walls, of Girivraja 75
dama, house 42
dāna-śālā 66, 68
Devakula, at Māṭ 248-51
devagṛiha, abode of god 6, 42, 63, 64, 103, 233, 252, *devāyatana* 103, *devavimāna-gṛiha* 312, *vimāna*, see below
Devanirmita, name of Jaina Stūpa at Mathura 217, 220, 230
devasadana, seat of god 6, 34, 35, 47, 52, 121; see *harmikā*
dhāma mame, measuring of house 41
dharma-chihna, *yūpa* as, 35, 52
dharma-stambha, *yūpa* as, 52
dharuṇa, foundation 41
dhātugarbha 125,2 90
ḍholākāra, drum shaped 190
dhūmanetta 65; see *naina* 44 ; also *aksha*
dhvaja 35, 52, 54 62, 100, 122, 233,; *chakra-dhvaja*, *dhvaja-stambha*
dikmaṇḍala, round drum or abacus 98
divastambha, pillar with lamp 285
dockyard, at Lothal 20
door, *dvāra* 17, 19, 42, 58, 60, 66, 84, 103, 187, 211, 213, 285, 298, 303
—*kavāṭa* 65, 67.
—*aṇīdvāra* 67
—*chulladvāra* 60
—*garbhadvāra* 187, 211, 213
—*gopuradvāra* 19
—*mahādvāra* 60
—*pārśvadvāra* 285, 303
—*uttarapāsaga* 67
—drainage 18
—*dvārakoshṭha,-ka* 42, 62, 63, 66 ; see *alinda.*
dussastūpa 300
durga-vidhāna 84
duroṇa, house 42
dvigarbha 175, 183
dvyasra, apsidal 213, see *besara*
floor, see *kuṭṭima*
foundation, *prithivīstambhana*, *bhūmiyā-thirabhāvattha*, 77; 98, 124, 126, 128
gajapṛishṭhākṛiti 64, 190
gajasaṁghāṭa see *saṁghāṭa*
gajathara, moulding with elephant figures 210, see *thara*
garbha, *gabbha* (lit. "womb"), cell, room 60, 61, 64, 175, 180, 186, 210
—*dvigarbha*, *trigarbha*, *chaturgarbha*, *pañ-chagarbha*, *ekaśataśayana-gabbhā*, *sirigab-bha* 64
garbhagṛiha, "womb house", cella of a temple 6, 122, 187, 188, 194, 211, 213
garuḍadhvaja, at Besnagar 251
ghara, cave
—*mukha*, facade of a cave 187, 193, 194, 210, 213
— —*pañjara* 193
giñjaka, tiles 65
gomāṇāsiyā 67
gomatī śālā 44
gopānasī 63, 64, 65
gopura 19, 61, 68, 75, 103, 174
granthi, knot 43
granary 18, 19,
Great Bath 19
Great Stūpa, see *stūpa*, *mahāchetiya*
gṛiha, house 42
guhā, cave 64, 116 ; see cave
harmikā, "*tee*", or "divine mansion" on Stūpa top 6, 34, 35, 47, 52, 122, 127, 279, 280, 289 ; see *devasadana*

hammiya, harmya, room in upper storey 63, 64
haththisālā, elephant stable 61, 62
heṭṭitala 63
himagṛiha, summer house 67
hiraṇyastūpa, golden stūpa 40, 120, 122
house 17 f., 41-45 ; see palace
—Vedic words for house, *dama, duroṇa, dhāma, harmya, māna, pastyā, sadana, śālā*
—architectural details of house building 41-45, pillars 41, 57
—measuring of, *nimita, mita* 43, *dhāma mame* 42
—*śālāpati, vāstoshpati* 44
—*Śālā Sūkta* AV. 9. 3. 1f. 41-5
ijārā, dado 63
Indrakīla, peg 59
Indraśailaguhā 76
Indrayashṭi, triangle-headed standard 52 ; also *Indradhvaja, vaijayantī*, see motifs and symbols 125, 128
ishṭakā, brick 17, 18, 59, 76, 290, 320-3
ishṭakāvardhaki 290
jagatī, plinth 122
jālī work, 65-68, 74, 130, 200, 260 ; see *vedikā* pattern
Jarāsandha Kā Baiṭhaka 76
jharokhā, jālaka-vātāyana, śalākā-vātāyana
jantāghara 63
jīvadeha sayikā 176
kakshyā, court 45, 62, 85, 303
kamma, work 186, 187, 285, 298 ; see *navakamma*
kaṇṇikā 64
kapiśīrshaka, battlement or merlon
kavāṭa 65
kāya (=royal office) 45 ; *kāyamāna, kāyastha*
kīrti, rock-excavation, defined 99, 187, 206
kīrtimukha 187, 193, 198, 206, 207, 208, also *chaitya-window, sūryadvāra*, or sun-window
kīrtistambha 99, 187, 204, 206, 213
kiṭika, curtain, *saṁsaraṇa—, udghāṭana-*, 65
khambha 66, 298, see *stambha*
khaniya, cistern 228
kharabujiyā, melon-shaped 64, 279
koḍhi, hall 210
kore 43
kośa, kulāya, room 42
koshṭha,—ka, room 84, 62, 65
koshṭhikā 210
kubhā (=*guhā*) 186
Kulaha Vihāra 298
kumbha,-ka, pillar base and capital 66, 68, 174
Kumrahar Palace 59, 85-6, 89
kūṭa, peaked roof 63
kūṭāgāra. 62, 63, 64
kuṭṭima, floor 62, 63, 67, *hemakuṭṭima* 300
laur, lakuṭa, pillar 76
leṇa, layaṇa, cave
Mahāchetiya, Great Stūpa 124, 285, 297-301
Mahādvāra 60
Mahākuṇḍa 19
mahānasa 63
mahānavakarmika see *navakarmika*
mahāpatha 17, 19, 85
mahāśayanam 60
mahāsilākammāntika 187
mahāsopāna see *sopāna*
mahāsthāna, 252 see *sthāna*
mahāthūpa 298 see *Stūpa*
mahāvaḍhḍhaki 59
mahāvedikā 285, 286 see *vedikā*

mahāvihāra see *vihāra*
Mahāvijaya Prāsāda, palace of king Khāravela 175
Mahāummagga Prāsāda 59-60
maheśākhya 92, 290, 292, 301
makaratoraṇa 221, 294
mallaśālā 303
maṇḍapa, hall 187, 194, 198, 204, 279, 296, 297
maṇḍovara 122
maṅgalapushkariṇi 19 see *pushkariṇī*
mañjūshā, box-like projections of Andhra Stūpas 126, 290, 299 ; also *āyaka*, *āyakamañcha*
mashaka 59 see plaster
maththaka 59
Mauryan palace see Kumrahar
Mauryan pillars 95-7, 95-6, 171-2
medhi 128, 281
mukhamaṇḍapa 183, 206, 207, 278
mukhapaṭṭikā or *mukhāvaṭī* 63, *mukhapaṭṭa* 198
muñja 43
nābhi (=nave) 187
naddha 43
nahana 43
naina 44, see *dhūmanetta*
narathara 210 ; see *thara*
Nārāyaṇavāṭaka 185, 251, 252
navakamma 298
navakammika 285, 298
navanīta mattikā see plaster
nemichakra 299
nijjūha (=*niryūha*) 64, 67
nisīdiyā (=*nishadyā*) 176
nivesana, residential building 61
opaśa, outlet for smoke 44 see *netta*
outer railing 132-3
ovaraka (=*apavaraka*) 186, 298
pākāra, *prākāra* 17, 19, 59, 61, 62, 65, 66, 75, 84, 103, 131, 251
—of 18 cubits 61
—*kaṇṭhaka* 131
—*pāshāṇa-prākāra*, at Girivraja 75
padhāna maṇḍapa 285
padhāna sālā 298
paḍarachhanna 59
padmavaravedikā, railing replete with lotus design 131, 142, 166, 173, 211, 221-224, 231, 266
paiṭṭhāna 66
pakshā, *pakkhā*, wall 42, 63
palace see palace
palada (=*palāla*) 43, 65, with *paṇṇa*, etc. *parishvañjalya* 65, 43,
paṇāḍī 175, 187
panīya, *pāniya*, of water
—*bhājana* 187, 210
—*ghara* 187, *gharika* 210
—*poḍhi* 187, 210 (or only *poḍhi*)
pañjara 214, see *sīhapañjara*
parikhā, moat 17, 61, 66, 68, 84
parimaṇḍala chaitya, circular *chaityagṛiha* 203, 204, 278, 279
parichakā suchi 285, 286 ; see *sūchī*
parṇaśālā 33, 35, 214, 279
pāsaṇa see stone
—*pasanika*, stone worker 285
—*medavaṇṇa* 125, 126, 260, 299
pāsāṇakuṭṭima 124, 126
pekkhāghara, theatre 67
peṇḍaka (?) 285, 289
pillar (*khambha*, *skambha*, *stambha*, *sthūṇā*, *yashṭi*, *vaṁśa*, *thambha*, *laur* 34, 35, 41, 42-5, 46, 52, 57, 58-9, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 76, 77, 86-7, 89, 90,

97-103, 98-9, 99-100, 103, 109, 122, 130, 131, 171, 183, 184, 204. 281, 280, 282, 285, 288, 298, 299
—of railing, 127, 224 f.
—capital, see capital above
—base, *pūrṇaghaṭa*-shaped 184, 201, 209, 211
—*pratimit, parimit, upamit, prāgvaṁśa, prāchīnavaṁśa, udīchīnavaṁśa*, 43-4
plaster, *navanītamattikā, mashaka, shlakshṇamattikā, sanhamattikā, sudhākamma, ullokamattikā* 59, 62, 110, 290, 299, 300
prākāra, railing 127; city wall see *pākāra*
prāsāda see palace
prāsāda, temple, *prāsādottama* 252, *prāsādastambha* 99
pratīchī (= *pichhavāḍā*) 42
prithivīstambhana, consolidation of earth 77, see foundation
puṇyaśālā 282, 283
pradakshiṇāpatha, path of circumabulation, aisles (of a *chaitya* cave) 132, 187, 198
pushkariṇī, pokkhariṇī 19, 58, 61, 62, 63, 210, 249
pushpagrahaṇī, pushpādhāna, dais for receiving flower offering 231, 299
pūjāśilā, tablet for receiving worship 232, 251, 252, also *puhumī-śilāpaṭṭa* 232
prāṇāha 43
raśanā 52
rathyā 85
Rativaḍhḍhana Prāsāda 62
Ratnagṛiha 148
roof 17, 64-586
sabhā 19, 42, 63, 67, 85, 86, 87, 107 see Assembly Hall
sahassathambha pāsāda 63, 103
śailaguhā, rockcut cave 103
śālā 62, 109, 128
śālabhañjikā, caryatid 67, 182, 220, 224-9 etc., see *śālabhañjikā*
saṁghāṭa see *saṁghāṭa*
samuggaya, socket 66
Saptaparṇī Cave 76
sandaṁśa 43
sandhi 66
saṅghārāma, Buddhist monastery 189
saṅgītaśālā, minstrel's gallery 206, 207, 211
saṅkrama, bridge 66, 68
saṁthāgāra 19, 68, 103
sapaṭasaṁthara 298
śatabhujī 42, 109
selaghara, rock-cut cave 187
selakamma, stone work 59, 186, 187
selakhambha, silāthabha, selathambha, stone pillar 298
selamaṇṭava 297, 298
selavaḍhḍhaki 186, 298
Sīhala Vihāra 298
sīhapañjara, lattice work 63, 64, 65
śikya 43
śilākammāntika 187
śilākañchuka, śilā-āchchhādana 120, 280, 300, 301
silāvigaḍa bhicha 127
śiṁśumāraśiraḥ 130, 141
sirigabbha 64
siyahara, summer house 67
skambha see *stambha*
śobhāpaṭṭī 182
sopāna, staircase 63, 64
—its *kaṭiṅgara, pādamūla, matthaka* or *sīsa* 64
sopānatoraṇavedikā 232
stambha, skambha, sthūṇā etc. see pillar
skambha as *Jyeshṭha Brahma* 52
Skambha Sūkta 34, 52
Rudra-Śiva-Stambha 35

stambhayashṭi 98
—its symbolism 98-9
sthapati 109
stone (*pāsāṇa*)
—*medavaṇṇa pāsāṇa* 125, 126, 290, 299
—worker in stone 58, 285
—*pasanika* 285 ; *āvesani* 149, 298
—stone rampart at Girivraja 75
—stone wharf at Nagarjunikonda 299
sthāna, holystead 252
Stūpa see *Stūpa*
stūpī, finial 64, 65, 204, 213
stūpikā 66, 280
sūchī, cross-bar 66, 127, 286
—*puḍaṁtara* 286
—*parichakā sūchī* 286
sudhākamma see plaster
Sudharmā, palace of Indra 60, 62
sūryadvāra 208 (=*chaitya*-window or *kīrtimukha*)
thabo 131 see pillar
taḍāka, pond 298
takiā 127
tala, storey 63
temple, *prāsāda*, *sadaṁ*
—of Yaksha 116
—of Kārttikeya 302
—of Hārītī 332
—of Śiva 302
—its four components compared to that of a Stūpa 122
thara, figure moldings 210-11
—their origin 210-11
ṭhāṭa, *ṭhaṭṭhara* 43
toraṇa, gateway 127, 129-30, 158, 221, 266, 294
thūbha, *thūhā* 119, see *stūpa*
thūpikā 63, see *stūpikā*
tulā 63
udara 42
udhaṁpaṭa (=*ūrdhvapaṭa*) 285, 289, 292, 299, 300
udapāna, well 63
uttarapāsaga 67
udyāna, garden 62, 85
upasthānaśālā 198
upaṭhāṇa 62
Upphaka Pāsāda 62
ushṇīśa, *unhisa*, *unisa*, *unisapaṭa*, coping 127, 130, 285-6, 298
vaḍhḍhaki 59, 186, 298
vaṁśa, bamboo 43, 44
vānalaṭṭhi 65
vapra, city wall 17, 19, 84
vāstu, *vatthu*, architecture 63
vāstuveda 57
vāstuvidyā 65
vāstuvidyāchārya 59, 109
vajrāsana throne 172
vedi, 127, *vedikā*, railing 33, 34, 35, 46, 127, 132-3, 173, 182, 221-24, 285, 286; see *padmavara-vedikā*
—railing pillar 224 f.
vihāra, Buddhist monastery 186, 187, 189, 191, 193, 194, 197, 199, 202, 203, 205, 210, 278-9 298.
vimāna, divine car 47, 87
—of Sūryābhadeva 66
vinichchāyatana 62
vishuvat 44
vyālatoraṇa 266, see *makaratoraṇa*
wharf, of stone 299
window, *gavāksha*, *gokha*, *jharokhā*, *vātapāna*, *siṁha-paṁjara*, 64, 65, 68
—three types, *śalākāvātapāna*, *jālavātapāna*, *vedikā-vātapāna* 65

—*uddha-chhiddaka-vātapāna* 65
—*ambāri*, oriel 65
—wooden, 17, 57, 65-6, 89
yakshaṁ sadaṁ, Yaksha shrine 116
yanta, yantaka, locking 59, 60, 64
yashṭi, pillar 34, 122
yūpa, tiller, sacrificial stake, 34, 35, 40, 46, 52, 54, 57, 77, 119, 121-2, 138
—as *dharma chihna* 35, 52
—*chaitya yūpa* 77, 119
—its four parts 121-2
—compared to stūpa 121-2, 138
ardhachandra, half-moon-shaped stone 67
ardhachandraka, half medallion 287
Ardhanārīśvara, half male and half female 6, 45, 48-9, 257
aritra 56
Art and craft:
Indus Valley 16
Vedic 40-45
Mahājanapada 56-8, 66
Śaiśunāga-Nanda 82-3
see *śilpa*
ashṭadikkumārikā, eight maidens of space 125, 232
ashṭamaṅgalaka chihna, eight auspicious signs 233
—*mālā* 159
Ashṭamūrti 6, 45
asi-lakkhaṇa 58
aśmanmayī vāśī, stone celt 9, 40
aśoka 277
—*ottaṁsikā* 255
—*pushpaprachāyikā* 139
—*dohada* 226, 266, 319
Assamukhī 173
assamachchha 222
assatthāṇa, stable
aśvamukha 72
aśvattha 37
aśvavyāla 72
Asuras, the Titans 317
Asura 18, 39, 45, 317
—culture, in Indus Valley 18, 39, 45
—their philosophy of life in the *Chh. Up.* 18
avadhya 115
āvarta, spiral 74
āyāga, see under Architecture
āyāgapaṭṭa 241 f., 266
āyasa paraśu, copper axe (RV. X. 53. 9) 9
āyasī vāśī, copper celt 9, 40
—a weapon of Tvashṭā in RV. VIII. 29. 3
āyata 87
Ayodhyā 47
āyudha, weapon 56
—*lakkhaṇa* 58
—*purusha* 254
Āyurveda, science of life 57

Bacchanalian groups 246-8, 267
bachheḍī, sepals 99
bahirvedi 55
Bahudhā-jana 39
bahumukha 72
bahuśīrsha 72
Bahusuliya 298
balāhaka aśva, winged horse 136
Balarāma 235, 253 256
bandhura, seat 41
barber 58
Bārhadratha dynasty 75
barfīdār 32
basket maker 57
basūlā, basūlī, adze 9
beads, their shapes 30
belana-loḍhā 74

bhadra kalaśa, auspicious pot 51
bhadra maṇi, auspicious gem 118
bhadraśaṅkha, auspicious conch 222
Bhadrāśva, white winged dragon sacred to China 70
Bhagavato pamāṇa laṭṭhi 159
bhakti, cult 235, 238, 251 ff.
bhāṇḍāgārika 175
Bhārata 70
bhikshāpātra, begging bowl 54, 222
bhikshusaṅgha 189
bhiṅgāra 223
bhishak 56
bhittichitta, wall painting 66 ; see painting
bhramaraka, spiral 74
bhūjishya pātra, begging bowl 46
Bhūmi, Bhuiyāñ, earth goddess 25, 235
bhūyasī 87
Bīr = Yaksha 114
bisakhādikā 225
bisi 65
Bodhgaya 172-74
Bodhi, enlightenment 47
Bodhivṛiksha 288
—six Bodhi trees of the six Buddhas 138-9
boring, 30
bow, 46, 45, 56, 57, 58
bowfighter 56, 58
Brahmā 253, 254-5
Brahma (= Yaksha) 45, 115
—maha, festival for Yaksha 115
—pura 115
Brahma ha vai brahmāṇaṁ pushkare sasṛije 53
Brahmaṇaspati Soma 49
Brahmanical images, at Mathura 251-60
Brāhmasara 60
bṛihat-chhanda 44
bronze sculpture 22-23
budbudākāra, bubble shaped 64
Buddha 6,
his story in stone and colour
his life scenes 6, 126, 152-3, 272-3, 281, 287, 289
descent from Tushita heaven, dream of Māyā, oblique birth, seven steps, first bath, taming of Nalagiri, miracle of fire and water, ascent to heaven of thirtythree gods, three ladders of gold, silver and copper, vision of thousand Buddhas, presentation of four cups, etc.
his previous lives, *Jātaka*
represented by symbols 236
symbolic representation of his life 152-3
metaphysical pattern of his life 6
as Mahāpurusha 54
as yogī 121
as Chakravartī 121
his image, 236 ff
on coins 236, 238, 241-2,
on *paṭa* 282, 285, 288, 289, 292
its origin, at Mathura 217, 235-44, 271-2
in Gandhara 271-2
Buddhapada 281
Buddhapaṭa 282, 285, 288, 289, 292
Buddhism 119, 278
Buddhist legend 288
buffalo 36
building of a Stūpa 124-6
būjhā, quartzite 8
bull 25, 36, 46
burial mounds, at Lauriā Nandangarh 75, 76-7, 119
—pottery 27-8
carnelian (= *tamḍā*) 29
carpenter 57
casket 82

chaitya, see under Architecture
Chaityakas, a Buddhist sect 278, 284, 285
chakbhaurāñ, spiral 74
chakkalikā 65
chakra, wheel 41, 46, 51-2, 54, 90, 255, 320
—as arch symbol for Buddha 121
—*Tryadhvā chakra* 121
—*dvyara, pañchāra, shaḍara, sahasrāra* 52
—as Dharma 121
—Dharma-chakra 52
—Brahma-chakra, Bhavachakra or Saṁsāra-chakra, Kālachakra, Jīvanachakra 51
—Vṛittachakra of Vishṇu 52
—Sudarśanachakra 52, 54
—*paṭa,--paṭṭa* 232, 239, 285, 289, 292, 300
—*dhvaja*
Chakavāka Nāgarāja 132
Chakravartī, Sovereign 58. 191-2, 239, 289
Māndhātā 191-2
Mahā Sudassana 58
iconography 58, 239, 242, 243, 289
chakravyūha 154, 155
chalcedony, *karketana* 29
chāmara 66, 121
—*grāhiṇī* 271
chamasa 33, 41, 46, 57
chanda, chandra, moon, half medallion 45, 48, 211
chanda-suriya,-divākara, chandāsūraj 48, 61
chandana kalaśa 223
Chandrā, a Yakshī at Bharhut 132
Chandraśekhara, Śiva 6
charaṇa, academy of learning 56, 57
chariot (*ratha*) 41; cartwright, *rathakāra* 41, 57
charioteer 58
charu 33, 41, 46
chashāla 34, 40
chatasraḥ pradiśaḥ, four directions of space 47
Chātudisa Saṁgha 298
chatuḥsrakti, square 124
chatuḥ śriṅga, fourhorned 71
chātumahārājika gods 61, 134, 153
chatuppada paṁkti, row of quadrupeds 125, 210, 288, 289, 300
chaturdala, fourpetalled 74
chaturdaṁshṭra, fourjawed 45, 46
Chaturdvīpī Bhūgola, four continental geography 70
chaturmahādvīpa, four great continents
chatushkaparda, 40
chatvara, platform 114
chauphuliā, 74
chelaka, 58
chhandogati 51
Chha Kāmasarga 61
chilathitīke, for long enduring 89
chipiṭānana 317
chīranā 29
chitā, funeral pyre 119
chitrakṛit, painter 309
chitta, mind 4
chittaka, a cloth 58
chittakāra, 60
chittakamma painting 67
Chulakokā, a Yakshī at Bharhut 132, 135
Chūlā maha, cult of 165
chūtalatikā 225
Classical age, from 1st cent. A.D. to 7th cent. A. D. 2
Cloth :
assattharaṇā, hatthatharaṇa, rathattharaṇa, chittaka, goṇaka, paṭalika, paṭṭika 58
Coins :
punchmarked 68-70
viṁśatika, triṁśatika, kārshāpaṇa
Copper :
vessels 58
weapons 9, 40

tablets 38
culture 9, 13
as the chief metal in the Indus Valley 23
its Vedic name, *ayas* 23
corngrinder 57
cotton 58
Cultural life in and through art 5
cymbal 57
Daivāsuram 4, 39, 46, 50, 317
daivī nāva, divine boat 46
Dakshiṇāmūrti 6
dampatī 287, 313
daṇḍa 254
daṇḍadīpa 229
danta, ivory 65, 309
—*rūpa* 309
daśaṁātaraḥ 45
Daśamukhānugraha 6
daśaśīrshā vatsa 46
decorative elements 5
Desakas 298
design 5
for filling space
lends beauty to an object
as framing border
accessory figures
natural and conventional
deśya krīḍā 225
Deva, divine 6
—abiding in Stūpa or temple 6
—dūshya 300
—kumārikā 223
devaja maṇi 46
devajāta aśva 46
devaratha 46
Devī Kshmā, goddess earth 81
Devī Mātā Śrī, mother goddess Śrī 81
Devanirmita Stūpa 217, 220, 230
dhanusha, see bow
Dhānyakaṭaka or Amaravati
—the first capital of the Andhras 277
—Stūpa, named in inscriptions as *Dhanakaḍakachetiya, Dhānyaghaṭaka chetiya, Kaṭamahāchetiya* 284
—*nigama* 284
Dharma, dhamma :
—*chakra* 6, 34, 90-91, 119, 121, 126, 288
—*paṁkti* 126
—*kathikas*, preachers of Dhamma 298
—*vijaya* 10, 103
—kāmatā, —ghoso, —chalana, —niyama, —dāna, —paṭipati, —maṁgala, —saṁchava, —susūsā, —anusastu, —anuggaho,—sīlana, etc. 90
Dhammo Sanantano 54
dhātumaṇjūshā, relic casket 301
dhātugarbha (= *dagaba*) 125
dhmāṭṛi, melter 41, 57
dhussa 40 ; see *dūshya*
Dhvajavatī Kanyā 71
dhyānamudrā see *mudrā*
dīpamālā, row of lamps 128
Diśāmaha, cult of directions 127
Disāvratika, diśā worshippers
—*Disāpokkhiya* 134
dīrghatapasī 136
divi bhattiyo, divine motifs 61
dockyard, at Lothal 20
double headed eagle (= *dvimūrdhā śakuni, dviśirshṇī-*, or *ubhayataḥśirshṇī suparṇī*) 24, 46, 71, 73
—bull 46
dramaturgy, under music 57
—*naṭasūtras* of Śilālin and Kṛiśāśva 57
—Pāṇini on, 57
—School of Bharata 57
dṛishad 41
droṇa 41

droṇakalaśa 57
drum (=*dundubhi*) 57
Durgā 253, 260
Dussa Stūpa 300
dūshya, dūrśa 40
dvādaśāra, twelve-spoked 52
dvātiṁssā cha kumāriyo 126
dvimātā 45
Dyāvāpṛithivī, earth and heaven 47
dyer 58
dumna 56
earring 58
ekagrīva bahūdara 73
ekāṁsika 241
ekaśīrshāṇaḥ daśavatsāḥ 71, 73
ekāśma, monolithic 92
ekaśṛiṅga, unicorn 33
ekodara pṛithakgrīva 73
elephant frieze 73
embroiderer 57, 58
Enkidu 37
Erāpata Nāga 35
faience (=*kāñchalī miṭṭī*) 28-29,
folk art 5
—deities 119
footprints 153, 287
forces of Evil 4
gadā, mace 255, 320
gahapati, householder 284, 285
Gajalakshmī 254, see Śrī-Lakshmī
gajamachchha 222
gajapṛishṭhākṛiti 64
gajasaṁghāṭa see *saṁghāṭa*
—*vyāla* 72
gaṇa 317
gaṇadevatā 45
Gaṇapati 45, 49, 253, 259
gandhadāma 62
Gandhāra art, 261-76
—chronology 271
—geographical extent 260
—main sites situated on trade routes 261
—subjects and scenes 272-5
Gandhāri 261
Gandhārīṇām 261
Gandharva 7, 45
—*veda* 57
Gaṇesa Leṇa group 205
Gaṅgā 254
Gaṅgādhara 6
Gaṅgita Yaksha 134
garland (=*mālā, dāma, srak*) :
—making (*mālyagrathana, pushpochchaya, pushpagrathana, pushpābharaṇa*) 226, 228
— maker 58
—borne by dwarf Yakshas
—by elephant-headed Yakshas
—issued out from makara mouth
—*mālādhārī devā* 287, 301, 293
garta, seat 41
Garuḍa and Nāga 73
Gaura (=*Bos Gaurus*) 51
ghaṇṭāpaṁti, row of bells 222
ghaṭṭa maṭṭha, technique of producing polish, 67, 68
—*prabhā* 68
— of three kinds (*saprabha, samarīchi, sadyota*)
ghora 88
Ghṛita and Amṛita 51
Gilgamesh with bull 37
Girivraj 75f.
gods and goddesses, manifestations of one Divinity 4
—as symbols of celestial and earthly powers in the universe 3-4

gold (=*suvarṇa, hiraṇya*) ;
—in Indus Valley 29
—worker in (*hiraṇyakāra*) 41, 57
—inlay (*hiraṇyarūpa*) 42
—smith's art, highly developed in Indus and Vedic period 58
—in Sūtra period 58
—garland 47, 58
—*drāpi* 40
Golden Germ or Egg (*Hiraṇyagarbha*, etc.) 45, 47, 49
gomachchha 222
goṇaka 58
Gopa 41
Gopikā 229
goshṭhīyāna, picnic car 312
graha (=cup) 57
graiveyaka, neck ornament 58
grāvāṇau, stones for grinding 47
Greek invasion 119
gṛidhrayātu 72
griffin 72
grotesque 316-17
guhā 47
guhyaka, Yaksha 38, 198, 223, 246, 311
Haimavatavarsha=Bhāratavarsha 70
Haimavatī Umā 49
hair-styles 5
haṁsa 46, 97, 125, 266
—*krīḍā* 266
—their row 97, 125
Harappa (=*Hariyūpiyā*) 39
Harihaṁsa 46
Harihara 6, 254
Hārītī 114, 264
hastipa 57
hastimachchha 222
hastinakhaprabhāmaṇḍala, scalloped halo 228
hastinīpadvatī 44
hathattharaṇa 58
havirdhāna 43
hayasaṁghāṭa see *saṁghāṭā*
Hellenistic motifs 267
hemamāla 158
heraṇika 284
Himavanta 60
historical scenes 132
honeysuckle 74
Horsebreeding, a text on, from Boghozkoi 71
humorous scenes 173
icon, as symbol of divine 7
Īhāmṛiga, animal design, fanciful animals 5, 66, 67, 71, 174.
—*mukha* 317
Ikshubhañjikā 225
Ikshvākus 277, 282, 286
Indra 6, 235, 253, 259
—*dhvaja, -yashṭi* 46, 70
—his visit 6
—*maha*, his cult 35, 52
—*āsana* 46
Indus Valley art :
—discovery 15
—expansion 15
—Harappa and Mohenjo-daro 15
—chronology 38-39
—value 15
—character of its civilisation 15
—compared to Western Asiatic 20, 23, 36, 37, 38
īshā 41
ishu, arrow (*ishumat, ishukṛit, ishukāra*) 45, 56
ivory (=*dantarūpa*) 31, 66
—workers of Vidiśā 165
iyaṁ salilanidhane budhasa bhagavate śakiyānam 82
jadeite (=*masāra*) 29

Jaina Stūpa 217-8, 219 ff, 230-31
Jākha, Jakhaiyā = Yaksha 118
Jalakrīḍā, water sport 226
jālāṅguli kara 239
jalārdravasanā 226
jalebha, jalahasti 136, 174, 222
Jambūdvīpa 70-74
jaṅghikā 320
Jarāsandh kā Baiṭhak 76
jaṭājūṭa, matted locks 259
Jātakas, earlier births of the Buddha
—scenes 126, 137, 244, 280, 287
Jayavijaya gumphā 183
jeweller 57
jewellery, two hoards from Harappa 29
—four hoards from Mohenjo-daro 29
—beads, flat strips, girdles, metal cones, necklace, 30-31
—hairpins 31
—miscellaneous 31
—on female terracottas 24, 25
—circular pendants for necklaces 58
Jīvaputraprachāyikā 225
jyākāra, bowmaker
Jyeshṭhā Alakshmī 81
Jyeshṭha Brahma 52
Jyotirliṅga 6, 46, 51
kadruka 41
kaivarta 41
kalaśa 41
kalasapaṭa 285
Kalpavṛiksha, Kalpalatā, wishfulfilling tree or creeper, 6, 47, 53, 119, 142-3, 144, 145, 146, 155, 192, 222, 269
—producing various desideratives 142-3
—ten kinds of 146
—producing *mithunas* 142, 144, 145, 155
kalpadūshya vṛiksha 192
Kāmadeva, God of Love 253, 311, 316
kāmalatā, wishfulfilling creeper 53, 269; see *kalpavṛiksha*
Kāmāntaka 6
Kāmāvachara gods, their six types 161
kammādhiṭṭhāyaka 124
kāṇḍavīṇā 57
kandukakrīḍā 228
kaṁsa 41, 58
kaṇṭakāri, acanthus 74
kaparda 24, 243
kapiśīrshaka, battlement 66, 73, 84, 131
kappaka, barber 58
karāla 317
Karīshiṇī 82
karkarī 57
karmāra 41, 45, 56
karṇaveshṭaka 58
karoṭapāṇi 126
Kārttikeya 233, 253, 258-9
kāshṭhakarma, Pkt. *kaṭṭhakamma* 65, 68, 103
kaṭa (= matting) maker 56
kaulālaka, potter 57
kavacha, armour 56
kāyotsarga mudrā see *mudrā*
keśākula-mukhī 226
keśanistoyakāriṇī 266
keśavīthī 318
Keśīvadha 254
ketu, ensign 46, 51
Ketumāla 70
khaḍa patthara 29
khādi 24
khaggadharā 126
kharva 317
khetavijjā 58
kīchaka 156, 246
kiṁkara 88, 196

kīnāśa 41, 56
kiñjalkinī 47, 142, 285
kiṅkhiṇī jāla 62, 131, 291
Kinnara 72
kokayātu 72
kokilakeśapāśa 226
Konākamana, his stūpa 90, 91
kopa, koppu see *kumbā*
koranā 30
kośa 41
kosseyya 58
kshurapra mālā 315
Kubera Yaksha 132, 246, 253, 260
kubjikā 247
kulāla, potter 56
Kumāra 45, 49
Kumārīparvata 185
kumbā 40
Kumudvatī 316
kṛi 187, 206
krīḍā vihāra 225, 229
kṛishīvala 41
Kṛishṇa 235
—his childhood legends 245
kumbha kumbhī, earthen pot 41, 46, 57
kumbhakāra, potter 57, 58
Kumbhamushka (=Kumbhāṇḍa) 45
Kumbhāṇḍa 7, 45, 317
Kumrahar 89
kuṇḍa 33
kuṇḍala 46
kuṇḍalita paṭa 294
kuñjara 66
kuñjarāksha 74
kurīra 24, 40
Kushāṇa art, at Mathura 232-60
kusūla 57
labyrinth 74
lākshārāga 142
Lakshmī 253, 259-60 ; see Śrī-Lakshmī
lāñchhana, distinctive sign 235
lapidary's art (=*maṇikarma, maṇiśilpa*) 41, 83, 103
lapis lazuli (=*Rājāvarta*) 29
lepyakāra, lepyakṛit 308, 309
līlākamala 227, 312
līlāmayūrabarha bhaṅgī keśapāśa 319
tīlaṭṭhiya sālabhañjikā 67
liṅga 6, 78
—*vigraha* 6, 257
—*ekamukhī, pañchamukhī* 257
lion frieze 73
loḍhaka 74
loga 77
loharūpa 309
lokottara mahāpurusha, supermundane great being, 293
loṭā 41
Lothal, dockyard 20
lotus motif 141-2
—its various kinds 131
—on *padmavara vedikā* 221-2 ; see *padma*.
lute 57
machchha :
gaja-, go-, hasti-, maga- 222
nara- 173, 122
vṛishabha 141
madhu 49
—*kośā* 46
madhūchchhishṭa, cere perdue 23
madhye saṅgrāhyā 22
magara, crocodile 66
magnāṁśuka 226
maha, folk festival or cult 139-41
—a list of 138
mahāājāneya paśu 34, 69, 98, 90-1, 100
mahābala 117

Mahābrahmā 126
mahādeva, great god 46
mahadupaṭṭhāṇa 116
Mahājanapada period, art in 56-68
mahākāya, colossal 88, 117
Mahākokā *devatā* 135
mahālaka vijita 102
Mahā Nagna 22, 47
Mahā Nagnī 22, 47, 309
mahānartakī, great dancer 228
Mahāparinirvāṇa, great decease 153
mahāprātihārya, great miracle 157
mahāpurusha, superman or Great Being 4, 6, 121, 134, 293
—*lokottara* 293
—*lakshaṇa* 293
mahāpushkara sraj 223
Mahārāja, Mahārājika 115, 126, see *chātumma hārājika*
mahāśreshṭhin 285
mahāsya śvā 46
mahat 49, 116
mahātimiṅgala 137
Mahāvijaya rājā 176
mahāvīra 46
Mahāvishṇu 255
Mahī mātā 309
mahīmayī mūrti, clay image 308
Mahīsāsaka, a Buddhist sect 298
mahisha 46, 51
Mahishamardinī 253, 260
mahishavyāla 72
mahoraga 46, 72, 232, 266
makaḍā 74
makarikā 294
mālādhārī deva 274, 287, 289, 293
malaga 41
mālāgandhavilepana 58
mālyachaṅgerī 228
mānasarovara 60
maṇḍa 56
maṇḍala 46
mandāra 47
Māndhātā 191-2
maṅgala ghaṭa, auspicious pot 51
maṅgala kalaśa 51, 99
maṅgalaka mālā 156
maṇikāra 41, 57, 58, see lapidarist
maṇikarma 103
maṇilakkhaṇa 58
maṇiśilpa 103
manosilā tala 61
Māra, evil-genius 4, 126
Māran (=*yaksha*) 114
mārdaṅgika 320
marīchi 68, *samarīchi* with polish ; see polish
māsha, a weight 69
mashakam 125
Mathura,
—as a centre of art 216
—art, style and contents 216ff.
—Jaina art 230-34
mātṛikā 45
mātṛimūrti 229
maṭṭha 68
mātugāma potthaka rūpaka 60
Meaning (*Artha*), its quest 4
—without it art is blind 4
medhi 128
Medieval period, 700-1200 A.D.:
Early, 700-900 A.D. 2
Late, 900-1200 A. D. 2
mekhalā 24
Menakā 228 ; see Urvaśī
meshavyāla 72
Milking of Earth Mother by king 46

millstones 58
mīnamithuna, fish pair 232, 233
mirror 58
Miśrakeśī 136
mithuna, couple 6, 47, 49, 53, 142, 144, 145, 155, 196, 269, 313
—produced from *kalpavṛiksha* 53, 142, 144, 145, 155
mortars 58
mother goddess 22, 24, 25, 45, 46, 49, 77-82
—Māyā 24
—Aditi Devamātā 24, 25
—Śrī 24-5, 80-82
—Anāhitā, Aditi, Innini, Istar, Isis 25
—Keśinī 46
—Koṭṭāvī and Kālikā 46
—*mātṛikā, dvimātā, saptamātaraḥ, daśamātaraḥ* 45
—*tisraḥ devīḥ* 45
—ring-stones 77-10
—her pose on ring stones 80
motifs : in Indian art 74
—their countrywide exchange 294-5
—*rūpaka* 66, 67 *mahārūpakāraka* 187
—animal 153, 222
—floral 153
—Hellenistic 267
—*kapiśīrshaka* 66, 73, 84, 131
—*vedikā* 46
—Uttarakuru 223
mṛigarūpa 71
Mṛityuñjaya 6
muchakunda (="honey suckle") 74, 78, 80, 222
mudrā, pose
—*abhaya* 203, 239, 240
—*añjali* 204
—*dhyāna* 234, 239, 271
—*katyavalambita* 22, 203
—*kāyotsarga* 234
—*latāhasta* 22
muktādāmakalāpaka 125
muktākiṅkiṇi jālaka 125
muktā yajñopavīta 294
mukunda see *muchakunda*
mukuṭa 255
musala 256
music, science of 57
—instruments 57
nabhya, nave 41
nachchaka devatā, devā 289, 300
nachchakagītavāditra 58
naḍakāra 58
nāḍī 57
Nāga, serpent 45, 48, 135, 248,
—symbol in various pantheons 48
—cult 5, 119
—iconography 135
—*mudrā* 70
—rāja figure 280
nāgadanta, elephant-tusk shaped peg 158, 223
Naigama 284
Naigameśa 233
Nāka 47
nānādharma 39
nānāmukha 317
Nandī, Śiva's Bull 46
Nandiśvara 6
nandyāvarta 74
nāpita 41
nara 66
Nārada 46
Nārāyaṇa 45, 49
nārī latā 53
nāsāgradṛishṭi 271
Naṭarāja 6
Nāṭya, dramaturgy 57

nau 56
uāvāja 41, 56
navanīta mattikā 124-5 ; also *mashakam, maskā*
nemi 41
nidhi, treasure 46, 317
Nigama, its organisation 317
Nikharva, a *nidhi* 317
nīlotpala patra 98
nishka 58
Nṛitu, dancer 23, 45
Nṛitū 45
oblique birth, of Indra
—of Buddha
—of Skanda 46
occupations 41
opaśa 40
Orissa caves, see Udaigiri-Khaṇḍagiri caves
ornaments 58
pādapīṭha 249
padma 47, 53; see lotus
padmaka 287
padmajā sṛishṭi 53
padmakośa 98
padmamālinī 81
padmanemi 81
padmāsana, lotus-throne 121, 233, 239, 271
padmasambhavā 81
Padmā-Śrī 82
padmātapatra 240
padmeshthitā 81
Padminī 227
padumaka 300
palace : *prāsāda, pāsāda, rājakula, pāsādavara, rājabhavana, rājanivesana, vāsaghara, vimāna, nivāsa*, 19, 42, 58-9, 59-60, 61, 62-64, 85-6, 89, 103, 109, 175, 302-3
—in Indus Valley 19, at Kumarahar 59 ; 85-6, 89, Mahā-ummagga 59-60, Ratiavaḍḍhana, Upphaka 62, Mahāvijaya 175, at Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā 302-3
—defined, divisions and apartments, 63-4
—*heṭṭhapāsāda, uparipāsāda* 63, *sahassakhambhapāsāda* 103, *śatabhujīśālā* 42, 109, *śatadvāra* 42, *sahassathambha* 63, *sahasra-dvāragṛiha* 42
padumādika-gāhakā devā 125
painting :
—pre-historic 10-13
—on wall 58, 60-61, 62, 66, 67, 68
—on pottery, see pottery.
pakshagama simha, winged lion 71
pakshī mahisha, winged bison 71
Palaeolithic (= old stone) Age, culture 8
Pallavas 282
palmette, *tālaparṇa* 74
panasa, jack-fruit 142
pañchapaṭṭika 32
pañchaśarīrī 73
Pañchabrahmā 6
Pañchaśikha 126
Pañcha Vṛishṇi Vīra 118
Pañchendra 259
Pāṇḍu leṇa 202-3
paṇigha 41
pāṇiyagharika 284
pañjaka design 70, 205
paṅkhaḍī 99
Pāpī-Lakshmī, Alakshmī 81
paraśu 14, 312
Pārijāta 47
parimaṇḍala 124
parīṇahya 41
parivṛittaśiras 73
—āvṛittaśiras 73
Parushṇī (= Rāvī) 39
Pārvatī 49

parvatopama 117
paryaṅkalīlāsana 258
paryaṅkikā 311
pāsāṇa koṭṭima 124
pashchād varīyasī 22
pāshāṇa prākāra at Girivraja 75
paśu 46
—*paṅkti* 37-8
—*pati* 45
pāta (=*patra*), ornament 30
patralatā, patrarachanā, patravallarī, scroll work or floral design 5
—as sacred as a Divine image 5
paṭa, paṭṭa, tablet or slab 298
—*Bodhipaṭa* 289
—*Budhapaṭa* 285, 280, 212
—*Chaityapaṭa* 288, 289
—*Chakapaṭa* 232, 233, 232 285, 290, 292
—*kalasapaṭa* 285
—*pādukāpaṭṭa* 282, 293
—*puhumī śilāpaṭṭa* 232
—*pūrṇaghaṭapaṭṭa* 285, 289
—*sothika* (*svastika*) *paṭa* 232, 285, 289, 292
—*stūpapaṭa* 280, 288, 289, 292
—*Tīrthaṅkarapaṭa* 233
—*udṁpaṭa* (*ūrdhvapaṭṭa*) 285, 289
—*āyāga paṭṭa* see *āyāgapaṭa*
—*sàpaṭasaṁthara* 298
—carved with life scenes 292
paṭalika 58
Patañjali, the grammarian 119
pātidharā, bowl-bearer 126
paṭṭadāma 62
paṭṭika 58
pavasta, sheep-skin 40
pauma laya 66, 67
peṇḍaka 285
peśakāra, peśiṭri 57, 58
peśas, embroidery 40
pestles 58
Phālguni 235
phullāvalī 311
physician 57
piṅgala 254
pīpal 32, 37, 47, 119
Piprahwa Stūpa 82-83
Piṭhapurām 277
ploughman 57
polish 68, 87, 88, 108-110
—pre-Maurya and Maurya 68
—a dozen terms in Sabhā Parva 87
pottha 66
potthakarūpa, stucco work 66, 209
potter 57
pottery
Indus Valley 25-28
produced on wheel 25-6
painted and plain 25-6
designs 5, 26, 28; *sūrya*, *chauphuliā*, *matsyaśalka* or *saharesā*, *pīpal*, *vihaṅgihā*, etc.
types 26-27, 28
NBP Ware 68
NG Ware 68
prabhāmaṇḍala 239-40
prāchāṁ krīḍā "northern sport" 139, 224
prāchyāḥ, northerners 124
pradakshiṇāpatha see circumambulation
pradhi 41
prajñāskandha 293
pralambakarṇapāśa 239
pramatha 45, 319
prasādhikā 266
pratimā 103
Pravaragiri (=Barabar Hills) 92
pṛishṭha-gamita, addorsed 73, see *saṁghāṭa*

pṛithivī śilāpaṭṭa 110
Pṛithivī-Varāha 46
Pṛithu and Pṛithivī 46
pṛithuśroṇi 22
pūjāśilā 127
punchmarked coins :
—date 68
—find places 68
—symbols on them 68-70
puṇḍarīka, lotus 47
puṅgava-puṅgavī, man-woman 191
puṇyaśālā 136, 282
pupphadāma 62
pūrṇaghaṭa, *pūrṇakumbha*, *puṇṇaghaṭa*, *pūrṇakalaśa*, full vase 46, 51, 53, 98, 99-100, 119, 124, 125, 184, 201, 209, 211, 215, 233, 266, 283, 285, 289, 300, 301
—with lotus 53
—*pushpapidhāna pūrṇaghaṭa* 283
—*kanyā*, or *nārī*, woman with full vase 51
—*dhārī* 301
—*puṇṇaghaṭapaṭimaṇḍita ghara* 51
—*puṇṇaghaṭapaṅkti* 125, 289, 300
—*paṭa*, *kalasapaṭa* 285, 289
—as pillar capital and base, see architecture
purusha, a measure 48
purushavigraha 72
Pūrvaśaila 278
Pūrvaseliya 298
pushkara 47, 53
—*sraja*, 47, 185
pushkariṇī 81
Pushpa, flower
pushpābharaṇa 226
pushpādhāna 125
pushpagrahaṇī 125
pushpagrathana 226
pupphalatā 125
pushpapaṅkti 300
pushpochchaya 226
pushpaprachāyikā 223
pushpasraka 233
Pushyamitra, Senāpati 119
pustakṛit 308
putravallabhā 229
Rājā (=*yaksha*) 115
—Rāja king of Yakshas
Rājagiriyas 278
rajaka 58
rājalekhaka 284
rājaśilpī 109
rājatakshā 109
rajayitṛi 41, 56
rajjusarja, rope-maker 41
rakshāmaṇḍala 136
rakshāpañjara 135
rakshāpaṅkti 293
rakshāsūtra 245
Rakshitā gods 135
Rānīgumphā 175-9
—scenes identified 177-8, 179-83
rathakāra 41, 56, 57
rathamukha 41
rathavahana 41
rathika 58
ratthatharaṇā 58
Rathyā Yaksha 114
ratnagghiya paṅkti 126
ratnagiri 75, 76
ratnapātra 233
ratnapushpa 82, 301
ratti, a weight 69
ravichandatāra rūpa padumaka 125
reed flute 57
—maker 58
rekhākṛiti, geometrical design 5
Revanta 46

ṛiddhiśṛiṅga, cornucopiae
ring stones 77-80
routes, ancient Indian 128, 261 ff.
royal statues, at Mathura 240-51
rukkhadevatā maha 6
rukma 58
rūpa, rūpaka, form, design 66, 6, 71, 103, 125, 210, 300,
—*rūpaka-sahassakalita* 66, 67
—*vikaṭarūpa, vyālarūpa* 71
rūpapiṅśana 40
Rūpa Satta, session of beauty 1
ruru 66
sabha rūpaka 290, 300
Ṣachī 135-6
Sadāmattaka 287
sādrika sammadaṁ turaṁ devānām 136
sāgara-mahāsāgara 60
sahakāra-bhaṅjikā 225
sahasrāksha 45
sahasra, thousand
—*purusha* 46
—*śṛiṅga vṛishabha* 46
Sahasrātmā Buddha 46
Śaiśunāga Dynasty 75 ff.
Śaiśunāga-Nanda Period 75-83
sakarpārā 32
śakaṭa 41
—*līlā* 254
Sakka Vilāsa 60
Śakra 126
Śālabhaṅjikā, woman and tree motif 67, 139, 217, 224-229, 232, 233, 274,
—the motif in various periods 225
—described in the *Avadāna-śataka* and *Nidānakathā*
śalākā 70
—*vātāyana* see *jālī*
Salila Krīḍā, water sport 217, 225
Salilam, the ocean 47, 49
Sambodhi, enlightenment 153
saṁdhamana 40
saṁghāṭa, saṅghāḍa, animal pairs as capital 63, 66, 73, 130, 153, 154, 156, 199, 201, 215
—*gaja*- 63, 66, 73, 156, 199, 215
—*haya*- 63, 66, 73, 154 199, 215
—*mṛiga*- 154
—*nara*- 63
—*siṁha*- 73, 130, 156, 201
—*vṛisha*- 130, 201, 215
sammukhīkṛita 73
Samudra 45, 49
śamulya (=samūr) 40
śaṅkha, shell 31-2
Śaṅkukarṇa, a Yaksha name 173
sapaksha, winged :
—*siṁha* 72, 130, 153
—*saṁghāṭa* 130
—*vṛisha saṁghāṭa* 130
—*vyāghra machchha* 222
sapta, seven :
—*aśva* 46
—*mātaraḥ* 45
—*mātṛikā* 49, 253, 260
—*padī* 46
—*ṛishi* 45
—*ratna*, seven jewels ; in each home 52 ; of a Chakravartī 46, 52, 282, 289 ; *chakra, hasti, aśva, maṇi, strī, gṛihapati*, and *pariṇāyaka*
—*svasāraḥ* 45
saptatantrī, saptadhātu vīṇā 45
śarabha 66
sārasa, bird 78
Sarasvatī 253
Sarnath, Chakra-Lion-Capital 98-101, 102-3
Sarpa-gumphā 184
śarpayiṭṛi 56

sārtha 284
sarvatobhadrikā 234
Śatarūpā 46
Sātavāhanas 277 ff.
Sātavāhana, see Āndhra-Sātavāhana
—emperors, Siri Sivamaka Sada, Vāsiṭhī-putrapulumāvi, Yadnya Sri Sadakan 286
Sātghar 92
saṭṭaka 136
Sūtthavāha patha 194
Sauparṇākhyāna 50
seals, Indus Valley 32-8
—their types 35-6
—animals on 36-38
śekhara 226
Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu 255
Session of Beauty 4
seta chhata 60
shaḍara, six-armed symbol 69, 78
shell objects 31
Siddhātikas, a Buddhist sect 278
śikya 223
śilātalagatā 227
śilāvigaḍa (= made of stone) 90
silken cloth 58
śilpa, sippa, art and craft 40, 45, 55, 56-7, 58, 67-8
—as *Jānapadī vṛitti* 56
—in the Śatarudriya 56-7
—superior (*ukhaṭṭha*) and inferior (*hīna*) 57
—from *Śrauta sūtras* and *Jātakas* 57
—18 Śilpas 67
— 25 major Śilpas 58
—in the Janapada period 67-8
—organised in *śreṇis* 57
śilpī 55
silver 29
siṁha, lion :
—*karṇa* 213
—*āsana* 243, 271
—*vāhinī* 253, 260
—*vyāla* 72, 143
Sineru-paribhaṇḍa 60
Sirimā devatā see Śrī
Śiva 6, 34, 35, 36, 235, 253, 254, 256, 257, 320
—Ashṭamūrti 6
—Paśupati 6, 34
—Rudra 34
—Mahādeva 34
—Mṛigavyādha 36
—in liṅga form 253. 257
—in human form 253, 257
—Ardhanārīśvara 257
—with Pārvatī 253, 257
—his spear 35
skambha see pillar
skabhīyān 41
ślakshṇa, polished 110
ślakshṇīkaraṇa, polishing 108, 110
smelter 57
Soma 57
Sonagiri 75
sothikapaṭa see *paṭa*
spider's web 74
spiral 74
śreshṭhi 246, 285
—*pamukha* 285
Śrī, a mother goddess
Śrī and Lakshmī, two consorts of Vishṇu 40, 82
Śrī-Lakshmī, 40, 45, 47, 81, 82, 119, 135, 140-1, 154, 158, 173, 184, 204, 253, 259-60, 310-11
Śrī and Aśrī 40, see also Pāpī-Lakshmī
Śrīmā 47, 81, 135
Śrī, her cult 81

—*chakra*,—*yantra* 80, 135
—Sūkta, elaborated 80-82
—*vatsa* 78, 157, 232, 233, 234
—*vṛiksha* 74, 153, 184
Śrī-(=royal) *kareṇu* 64
—*śayana* 64
—*vitāna* 64
Śrīparvata 296, 298
śṛiṅgāra caskets, of ten kinds 223
śṛiṅga vṛisha, unicorn 33, 36
stadium 303
sthāna 114
sthānaka 255
Stūpa=mound (on relics), *chaitya*, *chetiya*, *thūpa*, *mahāstūpa*, *mahāchetiya dhātugarbha* 5, 34, 40, 82-3, 90, 91-2, 119-174, 186f, 193-4, 204, 208, 217-24, 230-231, 262-70, 277-307, 231
—*śilāthūpa* 124, *dussathūpa*, 300, *majjhima chetiya* 124, Hiraṇya Stūpa, Konākamana Stūpa, Piprahwa Stūpa, Bharhut Stūpa, Sanchi and Bhelsa Stūpas, Stūpas in Western Indian and other chaitya-caves, Jaina Stūpas at Mathura, Devanirmita Stūpa, Mathura Buddhist Stūpas, Gandhāra Stūpas, Andhra Stūpas, etc.
—defined and explained 5, 119-128
—in RV. 7, 2.1, 1. 24.7, Stūpa, Hiraṇyastūpa 40, 120, 122
—earlier form 119-20.
—earlier traditions and symbolism 120-24
—as Pile of Light 120
—as Mound of Gold 120, 122
—associated with the life of a Mahāpurusha, of a Chakravartī 120
—for Chakravartī, Buddha and Pratyeka-Buddhas 123
—on Śarīra-dhātu (bodily relic) 120
—Buddha's sanction in its favour 123
—as a monument depicting life of community 5, 119, 129
—as a documentary of contemporary life 122-3
—eight Stūpas on the relics of Buddha 120-1
—signifying Buddha's Parinirvāṇa, but a felicitating symbol 122
—three kinds 137
—Yūpa inside it 124
—compared to a Yūpa 121-2, 138
—compared to a Prāsāda 122
—its enlargement, 90, 91-2, 120, 292, 301, see *alpeśākhya maheśākhya*.
— —twice the original, *thuve dutiyaṁ vaḍhite* 90
— —with stone encasing, *śilā-āchchhādana*, *śilākañchuka* 120, 280, 300, 301
—compared to a water bubble 125, 126
—of bell like shape 126
—sited on the trade routes 128
—as a symbol of tetradic pattern of cosmos 127
—building of a Stūpa, *thūpakamma*, *thūpārambha*, described in the *Mahāvaṁsa* 124
—laying of its foundation 124-5
—stone floor 126
—formula of the plaster clay used in consolidation of the ground 124
—slab showing Stūpa (=*Stūpapaṭṭa*, *chetiyapaṭa*) 232, 233, 280, 287, 288, 289, 293, 299, 300
sthapati 56
sthauṇabhārika 29

sthālī 41
stones :
—*būjhā*, quartzite 8
—agate, *lekhāśma*, *galvarka*, *haqīk* 29
—semiprecious 29
—haematite, a kind of soft red stone 10
—*khaḍpatthar* 29
—*chunār* sandstone
—sandstone
—spatted red sand stone, at Mathura 216
—*medavaṇṇa* marble
—see p. 3.
Subhadrā 136
Sudarśanā 136
Sugandhā 227
sukapardā 40
śuka sārikā 227
śukavyāla 72
Sukhāvatī 47
śuktikarṇa 196
sukurīrā 40
Sumeru 47, 53-4
Śuṅga art 119-174
—its quality 119
Supalāśa 53
suparṇa 46, 51, 71, 72, 73
—*mahisha* 71
—*yātu* 72
Garuḍa and Nāga 51
suparṇī 73
supratīka 40
surāghaṭa 311
sūrmi, hollow tube
sūrpa 41
—*kāra* 41
Śūrpaka 316
surūpakṛitnu 40
Sūrya, sun 48, 73, 211, 253, 254, 257-8, 267
—as symbol 69
suśilpa 40
suśirā sūrmi 41
śiśumāra yātu 72
sūtra, thread 41
suvarṇaghaṇṭāpaṅkti 125
suvarṇapushpa 83
suvarṇa śilpa, jeweller's art 103
suvarṇa yashṭi 158
svarūpa 317
svastika, symbol of quadruplication 32, 46, 49-50, 69, 70, 74, 232
—*paṭṭa* 232, 289, 292
śvayātu 72
svopaśā 40
śyenavyāla 72
śyenamachchha 222
symbols, 4-5, 45-7, 45-55, 68-70, 80, 86, 232-3, 244-5, 325-36
—Vedic, in art 45-55
—on punchmarked and tribal coins 4, 68-70
—on the bottom of Kumrahar pillars 86
—on sealings 5
—on ring-stones 80
—on Āyāgapaṭṭa 232-3 ; see *paṭas*
—Hellenistic, in Mathura art 244-5
—their purpose, *śobhanārtha* & *arakshaṇārtha* 55
—Appendix I, pp. 325-36
takshā, carpenter 41, 45, 56, 57
takshaṇa 103
tālasamuchchhrita 117
tāladhvaja, *tālaketu*, palm-capital 74
tālamāna, iconometery 4
talava 57
talpa-maker 56
tāṇḍava dance 45
tantra, loom 40
tantu 41
tasara, shuttle 40

tashṭā 41
tata, worp 30
terracotta art :
—Indus 23-5, 309
—technique 23
—literary references 308-9
—Maurya, 309-10
—Śuṅga 185, 310-313
—308-324
tettiṁsa-devaputtā 126
Texts :
Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 261
Aṅgavijjā 159
Aṅguttara Nikāya 219
Aparājitapṛichchhā 72
Āpastamba Śrautasūtra 108
Arthaśāstra 69, 84, 85, 89, 315
Aśokan Epigraphs 89, 90, 91, 102, 103, 107, 127
Āśvalāyana G. S. 58
Atharva Veda 22, 33, 34, 35, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 54, 71, 73, 81, 98-9, 116, 117, 261
Aupapātika Sūtra 232
Avadānaśataka 224
Āvaśyaka Sūtra 180
Baudhāyana S.S. 57
Bhagavatī Sūtra 134
Brahmapurāṇa 72, 317
Bṛihatkalpasūtra Bhāshya 108
Bṛihatkathākosha 309
Buddhacharita 239, 316
Chhāndogya Upanishad 18, 261
Dīgha Nikāya 58, 105, 116, 117, 123-4
Divyāvadāna 35, 55, 135, 170, 186, 191-262, 295-6
Drāhyāyaṇa 116
Dramas of Bhāsa 180
Dramas of Harsha 180
Gobhila G. S. 116
Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 53
Harivaṁśa Purāṇa 72, 317
Harshacharita 45, 64, 159, 294
Jātakas 45, 53, 57, 59, 60-5, 89, 105, 137, 142-3, 157, 164, 225, 228, 261, 295, 296, 308
Jīvābhigama Sūtra 68
Kādambarī 67, 231
Kalpasūtra 231
Kāśyapa Saṁhitā 258
Kathāsaritsāgara 180
Kāvyamīmāṁsā 309
Keśavadāsa (Rāmachandrikā) 100
Kumārapālapratibodha 180
Kumārasambhava 259
Lalitavistara 54
Mahābhārata 53, 71, 73, 75-6, 82, 87-8, 108, 115-6, 117, 130, 135, 143-4, 181, 251, 259, 291, 308, 317
Mahāmāyūrī 195
Mahāvaṁśa 124-6, 129, 148, 170, 210, 231, 288
Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 259, 260, 308
Matsya Purāṇa 71, 72, 48, 159, 227, 230, 317
Meghadūta 145
Mṛichchhakaṭika 308, 312
Mṛigāvatīcharita 180
Nāyādhammakahā 67, 116
Niddesa 141
Niśīthachūrṇi 67
Pāṇini (Ashṭādhyāyī) 45, 56, 57, 59, 69, 117, 224, 261
Patañjali (Mahābhāshya) 86, 200
Paumachariya 146
Raghuvaṁśa 7, 228
Rājataraṅgiṇī 91

Rāmāyaṇa 53, 82, 100, 115, 127, 135, 143, 317
Rāyapaseṇiya 66-7, 116, 165, 221-2, 224, 230-31
Ṛigveda 9, 23-4, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 71-2, 77, 80-82, 99, 101, 116-7, 120, 206
Sáddharmapuṇḍarīka 231
Śākuntalam 145, 308
Sāmañña Phala Sutta 58
Śāṅkhāyana G. S. 65
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 22, 44, 45, 50, 52, 53, 58, 65, 71, 121-22, 124, 261
Saundarānanda 229, 316
Śrāvakāchāra 146
Sṛiṅgāramañjarī 227
Triśashṭiśalākāpurusha 160
Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā (Yajurveda) 25, 34, 40, 41
Vāmana Purāṇa 317
Vāyu Purāṇa 144, 235, 317
Vinaya Piṭaka 57
Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa 55
Vishṇu Purāṇa 7
trayastriṁśa deva 34
—*svarga* 6
tiraśchīna nirgamana 46, see oblique birth
Thīrthaṅkara image 233-4
tree :
—Bodhi trees 138-9
—*ābharaṇa* 192
—see *kalpavṛiksha*
Tree-of-life 47, 74, 153 ; see *Śrī-vṛiksha*
triphaṇa, triskeles 70, 78
triratna 119, 154, 232, 233, 281, 289
triśūla 46, 289
Trivikrama 40, 50, 154
—Vāmana and Virāṭ 50
tulāmāna 58
tūlika 58
turaga 66
turiyavādaka devatā 125, 300
two-headed bull 71 see double-headed
Tryambaka 45
Udaigiri & Khaṇḍagiri caves 175-85
udakaghaṭa, water pot 65
udaka-kshveḍikā 225
udakanisrita 135
udañchana 41
udapāna 249
udakatāḍana 226, 249
Udayagiri 75
uddalomi 58
udīchya veśa, northerner's dress 153, 224, 258
udyāna krīḍā 139, 217, 223
—in the Mātaṅga Jātaka 225
—in the Uddālaka Jātaka 225
unicorn 36
ukhā 41
ulloyachittiya 67
ulūkayātu 72
Umā-Maheśvara 6
upala-prakshiṇī 57
upāsaka 284
Upavedas, 57
—cultivated in Vedic academies
ūrdhvaṁtishṭha 41
ūrṇavābhi 74
ūrṇā 239, 271
Urvaśī, woman with sword 228
usabha, bull 66
ushṇīśa 239, 271
usulakshaṇa 58
utensil 41, 57, 58
—of stone
—of metal
—of clay
—of wood
—for cooking 57
utkshipta-śiras 73

utkīrṇa 206
uttamarūpadharā
Uttarakuru 5, 71, 119, 135, 142-5, 192-3
—visited by Māndhātā 135, 144, 192-3
uttarīya 241
vāchaka 298
vadhūmiva te śāle 44
Vaibhāragiri 75, 76
vaibhāyasī 87
vaijayantī, triangle-headed standard 46, 52, 70, 232, 233
vaikakshyaka 310
vajra 46
vajralepa 125
—its formula
Vākāṭaka 286
Vaṅkshu (or Chakshu), Oxus 70
vālaga 66
valībhṛit 318
vāmana, dwarf 317
vāmanaka 316
Vāmana-Virāṭ 45
vaṁśa-nartin 41
vanalaya 66
vanamālā 320
vanaspati 40, 47
vaṇij 56, 284
Varāha 46
varāheṇa pṛithivī saṁvidānā 46
Vardhamāna pratimā 234
varma 56
Vāsiṭhīputra Pulumāvi 286
vāstu, vāstuvidyā, vāstukarma, vāstuparikamma, architecture 56, 57, 58
vasudhāna kosha 35, 46
Vasudhārā 46
vātaraśanā 47
vayana, art of weaving 40
vayaṭri 41, 56
Vedic academies 57
—deities, in Baghaz-koi ins. 71
vellana 74
veṇīprasādhana 228
veśmāḍhya 75
veśmāsanavatī 87
Vessantara Jātaka
vetrāsana 311
viḍalakārī 41, 57
vidyā 56, 328-9
—*dhara* 329
— —*jamala* 66
Vidyādharādhivāsa 157
vihaga 66
vihāra see architecture
Vijayapurī 298
vikaṭa, grotesque 317
—*rūpa* 71
vimṛishṭāntarāṁsā 22
vīṇā, lute 57
—*gāthin* 41
—*vāda,-na* 41, 228
vipula 87
Vipulagiri 75, 76
Vīran (=Yaksha) 114
virūpa 317
viśālavaksha 239
viśeshaka rachanā 229
Vishṇu, 46, 82, 235, 253, 255, 320
—his consorts 82, see Śrī-Lakshmī
—Nṛisiṁhavarāha Vishṇu 255
—Śeshaśāyī 255
—Viśvarūpa 255
vistīrṇā 87
Viśvakarmā 40
Viśvarūpa nārī 46
Viśvavārā 45
vivāchasaḥ 39
vratas 141

Vṛishṇi Vīra 235, 253
Vṛitra 48
vṛittachakra 101
volute 74
vyāditāsya, gaping mouth 317
Vyāghragumphā 183
vyāla, fanciful figure 67, 72
—*rūpaka* 67
—*nara-*, *śyena-*, *vṛisha* 72
—16 *vyālas* in later *Śilpa* texts 72
vyantara devatā, subsidiary deity 7
vyūha, labyrinth 74, 83, 234, 252
water sports 226, 227
weaver 58
weaving 40-1
weights and measures 58
Western Ghats :
—Sātavāhanas wresting power from the Śakas 278
wheel 287, see *chakra*
winged :
—bison 71
—horse 136
—lion 71, 72, 130, 222
—bull 130
woman-and-tree motif, see *śālabhañjikā*
wooden :
—palace at Kumrahar 85-6, 89
—*śāla prākāra* 85
—carving 103
—see *Kaṭṭhakamma*, architecture
worship :
—of Yakshas, Nāgas and other folk deities 119
Yadnya-siri-sadakani 286
yajña 57
yajñopavīta 57
Yamunā 254
Yaksha : 5, 45, 48, 84, 110-118, 119, 126 132, 173, 246-48
—cult (*maha*) 5, 48, 114-118, 119
—*chetiya* 88, 114 ff.
—statues 110-118, 246-48
—their identification 112-3
—names 117, 173,
—*senāpati* 126
—*rājā*, *vīran*, *māran*, *jākha* 117-18
Yama 34, 46
Yamāntaka 6
yasminvṛikshe supalāśe devaiḥ saṁpibate yamaḥ 34
yātu 72
Yavyāvatī (=river Zhob) 39
Yogeśvara
Yogī 242, 243
yonirvai pushkaraparṇam 53
yuga 41
Yūpa, see architecture
—*vraska* 40

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Only material corrections are listed here.

Page	line	*for*	*read*
4	5	charater	character
5	21	depecting	depicting
6	33	Mṛituñjaya	Mṛityuñjaya
8	31	chalcidony	chalcedony
12	3	gaint	giant
17	24	excpting	excepting
17	6	citedal	citadel
19	25	,,	,,
20	2	tomn	town
31	35	body	today
41	20	rope-makar	rope-maker
44	5	and	had
64	30	roof at the	roof in the
66	25	faboulous	fabulous
67	4	beds steads	bedsteads
68	14	producing was	producing it was
71	9	marchant	merchant
71	21	*Dvyaāvartana*	*Dvyāvartana*
75	19	Soma-giri	Sonagiri
76	5	Bimbīsara	Bimbisāra
76	6	pantagon	pentagon
79	26	cylinderical	cylindrical
82	33	Śākhyas	Śākyas
84	20	Śiśupālagarhj	Śiśupālagarh
85	11	tank	bank
127	21	sokets	sockets
128		add at the end of the first para [Fig. 57].	
136	25	C.	3.
144	24	XXXIX-XIVIII.	XXXIX-XLVIII.
171	20	purāṇaghaṭa	pūrṇaghaṭa
184	19	sequel	square
197	4	dome	door
197	26	sprouted	spouted
254	30	[Figs. 169-9]	[Figs. 168-9]
262	3	Maedonian	Macedonian
266	13	wearing	bearing
295	14	pl. VII,	pl. VI,
315	31	[Fig. 420].	[Fig. 240].
328	11	Ulique	Uiliq
328	30	icodography	iconography
352	13	coxing	coaxing
352	23	Torṇa-gate	Toraṇa-gate

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